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THE

APOCALYPSE UNVEILED.

THE DAY OF JUDGMENT, THE RESURRECTION,

AND

THE MILLENNIUM,

Presented in a New Light.

THE REPOSSESSION OF PALESTINE BY THE JEWS AND THEIR CONVERSION TO CHRIST AS THEIR MESSIAH.

VOL. I.

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INTRODUCTION.

Dr. Adam Clark says, "The Book of Apocalypse "may be considered as a prophet continued in the "Church of God, uttering predictions relative to all "times, which have their successive fulfilment as ages "roll on; and thus it stands in the Christian Church in "the place of the succession of prophets in the Jewish "Church; and by this especial economy prophecy is still "continued, is always speaking; and yet a succession "of prophets rendered unnecessary."

This is a brief but true description of the character of this wonderful book, and is in accordance with the saying of the angel speaking in the book, "The testi-"mony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

The fulfilment of the prophecies of this book we may conclude, therefore, are the continued evidences to the world of the truth of the Christian religion; and are designed to support the faith and strengthen the hopes of Christians throughout the struggle which the Church is to maintain with the world.

The Apocalypse may be regarded as a *pictorial history of the Church*, exhibiting prophetically, with the sublimity of Oriental imagery, those events which have a tendency to promote her prosperity or to retard her

progress, and sketching the civil history of Christendom in its most prominent features wherever it has a bearing upon the interests of Christianity.

"Blessed are they that keep the sayings of this book," is the language employed to excite due attention to it on the part of the Church.

It is a revelation made by Jesus Christ for the comfort of the Church, and the duty of making ourselves acquainted with its sayings, and of seeking a knowledge of its meaning, so far as we may have the ability to do so, is undeniable.

Many great minds have been employed in seeking the mysterious treasures of this book, and much truth has been elicited, and some coincidents have been discovered between the events of the world's history and the prophecies it contains. But there is still room for inquiry, and probably the present age of the world is better adapted than any former period to open up the hitherto hidden depths, and enlighten the mysterious pages of the Book of the Apocalypse.

Within the last century a great change has come over the world, both in its civil and moral condition.

The wonderful developments of science, and the no less wonderful discoveries of art, have struck out new lights, which have scattered the darkness of the past and given new impulses to the intellect and powers of men.

The human mind, within the bounds of Christendom at least, has soared into higher regions of light, and has taken a position of intellectual elevation from which it looks down upon the past ages of the world's history with amazement, as it beholds the labyrinths of ignorance through which the world has passed.

The genius of Christianity, with the lamp of divine

revelation in her hand, has conducted man to his present exalted eminence. And the more steadily the eye of the world is directed to that light, the more will its vision be purified and expanded.

The whole of divine revelation was made *to* man, and *for* man. It is God the Creator speaking in language of love and parental admonition to man, his offspring.

From first to last, and all through the volume of Revelation, its purpose is most distinctly shown to be to convince man that he is a great and immortal being, possessing vast moral powers and capabilities of happiness, which are to act commensurate with eternity. So God made him; and this great truth is announced in almost the first breath of revelation, "Let us make "man *in our image, after our likeness.*"

But this great being is fallen. His noble powers are perverted. He is not now what God made him, nor is he where God designed he should be.* The purposes of the Creator in giving existence to this world, and to man as the lord of this creation, have been interfered with—they have been interrupted.

But all are to be recovered, and the progress and completion of this recovery are exhibited in the sublime scenery of the Apocalypse.

The kingdom of God is the consummation of Christianity! This lies at the foundation of Gospel preaching. Christ instructed his disciples when he sent them forth to preach, to proclaim to the world, *The kingdom of God is at hand.* The Gospel dispensation is a disciplinary state, designed to prepare man for that kingdom. This is in conformity with the history of God's progres-

* Gen. 6 : 6.

sive government, as we find it in the Bible. The call of Abraham was the first, and the Christian dispensation is the last stage in this order of progressive government, with man in his mortal state.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the Patriarchal Fathers, spread themselves over a period of more than two hundred years, during which time they journeyed from one country to another successively, receiving communications from God, and giving out, as occasion called for it, the feeble rays of the knowledge of the true God. This was the purpose for which these patriarchs were by the providence of God led from one country to another, that amongst all people the name of the true God might be spoken in the ears of the heathen.

In their days no prophetic voice was heard with a *Thus saith the Lord;* nor was there any distinct form of religious service embodied before the eyes of any nation. These patriarchs journeyed from country to country, and conversed with the kings and the people of different lands; and in this way a few feeble stars of the knowledge of God were set in the dark sky of heathen ignorance on which they might look and wonder.

This migratory method of testifying of the true God continued for about two hundred and twenty years; and until Jacob again embraced his beloved Joseph, clothed with the dignity and surrounded with the honors of the court of Egypt. The patriarchal age closes in Egypt, and a new scene opens in the drama of God's dealing with men.

The posterity of Jacob commenced their dwelling in that land under the favor of the court, and in possession of the choicest portions of the land.

But a continuance in this luxurious state was not in accordance with the purposes God had in view in lead-

ing them into that land, and their circumstances were changed.

Joseph was forgotten by the Pharaohs who came to the throne in after years, and his brethren, the Hebrews, fell into severe bondage, and labored under cruel task-masters.

This would seem a sad reverse of the happy condition in which they began their career in Egypt. But of two evils it was the lesser one; besides at the same time being necessary to effect the plans of God's future government of the world.

Had the posterity of Jacob continued to occupy the places of honor and distinction that Joseph did in the idolatrous court of the Pharaohs, no argument from Moses and Aaron, nor the miracles which attested the validity of their commission, could ever have induced the Hebrews to forsake the wealth and the luxury that would have bound them to that land.

Their bondage debased their minds, it is true; but the pride and the honors of the court would have fixed their principles in idolatry, and determined them against a departure from the country.

God was raising up a people who should be the founders of a nation, chosen and elect; as the depositories of his law, and to whom he would make himself known as he had not done to any other people; and Egypt was the country selected as the one best suited to the beginning of that design.

The divine purpose in this selection may be inferred from the character of that nation.

Egypt was renowned for her wisdom in all the earth. She was the land of abundance also, teeming with the varied productions of her bountiful fields, invigorated and fertilized by the delicious waters of her Nile. When

there was dearth in all other lands, there was corn in Egypt; and her well stored granaries led other nations to seek bread at her hands.

In this way many nations had intercourse with Egypt, and carried home with them not only corn from her vast storehouses, but also the miracles and wonders which the God of Moses and Aaron had shown upon that people.

Egypt was rich in costly and useful arts, too, beyond any other nation, and renowned alike for her wisdom and for her prowess in arms, she held a proud and scornful rank over other nations; and astonished the world with the grandeur and magnificence of her royal court.

But Egypt was a land of idolatry. Having a multitude of gods, she was ignorant of the one true God! The most religious nation on earth, yet there was none more degraded than she was in the objects of her idolatrous worship.

In placing Jacob's posterity there, God made himself known to Egypt in a manner which confounded her idols.

The mission of Moses and Aaron to the court of the Pharaohs to demand the release of the Hebrews,—the disdain and contempt with which their demand was met,—the delusive imitations of their miracles by the magi,—the successive judgments which shook the land, and terrified the people,—the submission and resistance which alternately swayed the stubborn will of Pharaoh,—the cry of terror which flew through the land when the hand of death in one night fell upon all the first-born in Egypt,—the final departure of the Hebrews, and the miraculous opening of the Red Sea for the safe passage of the Israelites, and which engulfed the whole

Egyptian host on the return of its waters to their bed; are too well known, and too frequently read in the inimitable history of the book of Exodus, to need a recital here.

By these events the name of the God of Israel was deeply impressed upon the Egyptian nation, and a monument was raised to his glory by the astounding displays of his power, more lasting than her renowned pyramids.

This was the beginning of a new dispensation, which took its first step in Egypt, but was consummated in the land of Canaan.

All who left Egypt, except Joshua and Caleb, died in the wilderness.

The minds of the people were too much degraded by Egyptian bondage, and too much attached to Egyptian habits, to form the material of the new nation. But their children, born in the wilderness, and trained there under the hand of Moses, became the root of the Jewish nation.

These, after their entrance into the land of Canaan, were under the government of judges appointed by God, until the days of Samuel.

During this dispensation the Tabernacle was the visible symbol of the Divine presence amongst them, and the Priesthood was the medium of instruction between God and his people.

The simplicity of their religious and political economy was just adapted to their very imperfect views of both, and was designed to last only while their state of national infancy continued.

But the days of this infancy came to an end, and were succeeded by a more exalted and elevated state of national distinction. The royal forms succeeded the

government of the judges, and a corresponding change took place in their religious economy. Prophets now announced the commands of Jehovah to the king and to the people, and God was known to the nation in a higher and nobler sense than he had been known to their fathers in preceding ages.

An entire change was made in their religious services. The temple now rose up in beauty and grandeur. The nation saluted the house of God with joyful hearts, and brought their offerings with praise and thanksgiving into it.

The splendid services of the temple, and the glory of this new nation, were reflected upon distant countries, and Jerusalem was crowded with strangers from all lands, who came to see and admire the magnificent temple, and the astonishing wisdom of its founder. What must have been the amazement of Egypt's queen, who was attracted thither by the fame of the Jewish king and his splendid court, when she beheld the temple, the palaces, and all the magnificence and wealth of Jerusalem, and reflected that this was achieved by the descendants of those people who were once the oppressed and cruelly-tasked brickmakers in her own country! The story of Moses and Aaron, and the scenes which threw Egypt into consternation in their day, must have come over her thoughts like flashes of vivid lightning, bringing conviction that no other than the God who brought this people out of Egypt, had now made them the glory and the praise of the whole earth.

But the Jewish dispensation accomplished that for which it was instituted; it had its appointed course, and it was fulfilled. It opened the way, and prepared the world for the higher and brighter dispensation of the Christian religion.

Under this dispensation Man is raised to a more exalted eminence of light and knowledge. Here he is to receive his meetness for the kingdom of God; that next state of exaltation which Christ taught the Church to pray for in the prayer which he gave as a model to all, of that devotion which would always be acceptable to heaven: *Thy kingdom come.*

Thus by a successive course of providential dispensations and appointments, each rising above that which had preceded it, is man to be brought up to the glory and perfection of his original creation, in the kingdom of God.

The Apocalypse represents the current of those events of which it treats under the opening of seven *seals*, the sounding of the same number of *trumpets*, and the pouring out of seven vials.

Besides those peculiar instrumental agents which refer to prominent events, there are also other important circumstances brought out under the vision of angels and beasts, and woman.

A close attention to the description of those events which transpire under the several instrumental announcements, will show that the seals and the trumpets pass over pretty much the same ground. The vials fill up the last period of the Christian dispensation, and complete the judgment day.

It will be further observed that the seals are employed in unfolding those events which are connected with the interests of the Church; while the trumpets announce those convulsions which mostly agitate the political world.

These markers of the revolution of time, are designed to keep the Church admonished, as the world progresses, of her real position and her gradual approach to her

final triumph; just as the beacons that blaze upon the high points of a long dark coast, cheer the hopes of the mariner amidst the storms of the ocean, and assure him of his approach to the port whither he is bound.

The language of the Book of Revelation is highly figurative, and forbids literal interpretation generally.

We are not to suppose, for example, that when the Prophet speaks of an angel descending from heaven, or flying through the air, that we are to expect in the fulfilment of the prophecy to see an angel poised in the air, or rapidly descending from the clouds to take his stand upon the earth. Whatever may have passed before the vision of the Prophet, a literal scene is not to be looked for by us.

The chapters which are confined to the Asiatic Churches will be omitted. They are so clear and direct in their meaning, that no explanation, beyond that which they carry with them, would be likely to add any interest to the subjects on which they treat.

THE APOCALYPSE UNVEILED.

CHAPTER IV.

1. *After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven; and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will show thee things which must be hereafter.*

2. *And immediately I was in the Spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.*

3. *And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone; and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.*

4. *And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.*

5. *And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.*

6. *And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts, full of eyes before and behind.*

7. *And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.*

8. *And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him;*

and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

9. *And when those beasts give glory, and honor, and thanks, to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,*

10. *The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,*

11. *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory, and honor, and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

The series of Apocalyptic visions which continue throughout the book under various symbolic representations, have their commencement with this chapter.

The Prophet had been receiving from Christ himself warning and encouragement, which he was to address to the Seven Churches of Asia.

But a new scene now opens; a door is opened in heaven, and he is called to come up and behold for himself *the things which must be hereafter.* He is no longer a hearer only, but he is exalted to a more eminent position, from which he beholds the vast developments of Providence, as they unfold themselves in the history of the Church and the governments of earth.

This chapter appears to be intended as a *programme* of the disclosures which are to follow, and to settle and establish certain principles which will more or less apply to the current of events, as they are sketched in the successive pictorial scenes.

The first object which arrests the Prophet's attention, is the throne which was set in heaven; and *one sat on the throne.* The throne always implies power and dominion. The scenes which follow are not to be set down as the mere offspring of chance, or the result of accidental circumstances. The throne is set in heaven, and under the controlling autho-

rity of him that sat on it, will the providential dispensations of the future be governed.

And that the purposes of those events may be understood, a rainbow was seen encircling the throne, of surpassing beauty and brightness, even like unto an *emerald.* This bow is the standing emblem of mercy and security.

Such was its purpose when given to Noah. When he cast his eyes upon the beautiful arch, as it spanned the heavens above him, all fears of another flood were dissipated, and he felt an assurance of safety.

This seems to be the purpose for which the rainbow surrounds the throne. Many of the future scenes will be of a kind which will shake heaven and earth. The Church will tremble under the shocks of the conflicts which she will be called to maintain with *principalities and powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places.* Amidst these *lightnings and thunders and voices which proceed out of the throne,* anxiety and fear will often assail the people of God ; but when they look upon the bow that surrounds the throne, they will know that God is in it, and their faith will rise superior to all fear.

The seven lamps of fire that were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God, imply the constant presence of such agents as are prepared and qualified to perform promptly and efficiently the commands of the Most High ; *who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire :** they burn with ardent zeal to hasten to the scene of danger, and surround with an invisible but an impregnable power the Church of God. So the old Prophet was surrounded in Dothan when his enemies sought his destruction.

And *before* the throne there was spread out a *sea of glass,* like unto crystal. The sea is used in Scripture to signify disorder and commotion, agitated and tossed by storms which cause it to cast up mire and dirt. Essentially and totally different is this from the sea which was seen before the throne.

* Heb. 1. : 9.

This figure, so transcendently beautiful, of such transparent purity, is designed to express the perfect order and harmony with which the Almighty accomplishes all the works of his providential dispensations. To man, and even to the righteous, these often appear dark, mysterious, and hard ; but the sea of glass, clear as a crystal, tells us there is nothing dark, nothing doubtful with God. He sees the infinite variety of earthly interests exactly as they exist ; not a sparrow falls without his notice. He sees through all nature and all time, with the same unerring certainty that the eye of man can penetrate and look through a sheet of the finest glass. The omniscience of God directs the exercise of his power over and through all nature, moral and physical, and detects every open and latent principle and action throughout the universe, with the certainty and truth of his own perfections ; the sea of glass is God's omniscience.

Another feature in the programme, is the presence of four and twenty elders, seated round about the throne, clothed in white raiment, and having on their heads crowns of gold. These, by their presence, express the well understood purpose of God, to bring in his ancient people the Jews.

They are seated round about the throne, showing that they are not forgotten, but are retained in heaven's purpose, until the time shall come, the appointed time, when they shall embrace the Messiahship and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The white robe is the emblem of their righteousness ; for they were righteous to the extent of their dispensation. The crown of gold signifies the honor in which they are held in the gracious purposes of God towards Israel. They are kings and priests of the Jewish dispensation, and are dear to God as the children of his ancient friend Abraham.

Their presence here answers the question so feelingly asked and confidently answered by St. Paul : *I say, then, hath God cast away his people ? God forbid. God hath not cast away his people, whom he foreknew.*

The ardent attachment of the Apostle to his Jewish kins-

men, is seen whenever he has occasion to speak about them, and he dwells with special interest upon their restoration to the divine favor and ultimate union with the Gentile Church !

They are at present the branches that have been broken off, but are to be grafted again into the olive tree. He notifies the Gentile Church, which was disposed to boast itself of the superior favor of God, that blindness *in part* is happened to Israel ; and that in consequence of this they have stumbled, but have not *fallen* from the favor and promise of God ; but this partial blindness will be removed when the fulness of the Gentiles shall come in, and *then all Israel shall be saved.**

In this vision now before the Prophet, the argument of the Apostle is brought out into practical view. The description of honor and power from the four beasts, is the fulness of the Gentiles ; and *when* this shout of praise from the whole Gentile Church goes up to him that sat upon the throne, *then* the four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat upon the throne, and unite in the worship of him *who created all things, and for whose pleasure they are and were created.*

This act expresses the submission of the Jews to Christ, and is an acknowledgment of his power and divinity, in the words used by the evangelist St. John,—chap 1, ver. 3 : *All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.*

The next inquiry is, What are the four beasts described as being *in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne* ?

These are intended to represent the four grand divisions of the earth.

In the visions of Daniel, the great kingdoms of the world are represented by different kinds of wild beasts ; as will be seen by reference to the book of Daniel ; also in the Revela-

* Rom. xi.

tions the symbol of political power, or a kingdom, is a beast —chap. 13.

The beasts described by Daniel, as well as those in the Revelations, are local, and signify some particular or individual kingdom ; but the four beasts of this opening vision of the Apocalypse, are, as before said, the four grand divisions of the earth, comprehending and embracing a great number and variety of kingdoms. The reasons for this opinion are as follows :—A new religion is introduced into the world,—a system of moral government which is to extend its influence over the whole world, and to embrace all governments, kingdoms, and dominions of men.

The *door which is opened in heaven*, is the introduction of this new economy of heaven amongst men, which is represented by the throne, and the one who sat upon it is Christ, who directs, rules, and controls all the agencies and influences of this economy of grace, by his Spirit : *And, lo! I am with you always, even unto the end.*

It is important to notice that all the four beasts are not represented as holding an equally near position to the throne. Of some it is said they are in the *midst of the throne*, and of others they were *round about* the throne.

This description of positions aptly illustrates those portions of the earth where the throne of Christianity is established, and distinguishes them from the distant regions which have only a small portion of Christian light shed upon them.

The first will be readily understood to be Europe and America, the latter Africa and Asia. Christianity has her seat in the midst of the two former ; her brightest manifestations, and her greatest power, are displayed here ; whilst the other continents, and the isles of the sea, which are round about the throne, at a greater moral distance from it, only see Christianity in the glimmering light of the Bible and Missionary societies. But the vision shows that Christianity is for all the world : not like the Jewish religion, limited to that

nation only, but is to extend its blessings to all the four quarters of the earth !

These beasts are represented as full of eyes within, and each having six wings. The eyes imply intellectual and moral capabilities of culture and improvement, and thus show that these beasts represent human character, while the wings show that by this intellectual and moral culture, they will all become equally elevated by the light and power of Christianity. The number of wings being equal on all the beasts, implies that their natural capabilities are equal, and under equal advantages of religious light and cultivation, their general improvement and social happiness will reach the same elevation. It is further said of these beasts, that they *rest not* day and night, saying, *Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.*

Under the light and influence of Christianity all these idolatrous beasts will ultimately renounce their heathenish superstition, and adopt the religion of Christ. Not that all the inhabitants of these four divisions of the earth will become the subjects of the life and power of this religion, but that its general prevalence amongst them will entirely change the rites and forms of their ancient idolatry and establish in their stead the Christian religion, in like manner as it did in the Roman empire. *Ask of me and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession*, Psalms 2 : 8.

They rest not; that is, when they are brought under this Christian influence, they will not rest or cease from it, or pause and finally turn back to their ancient idolatry, but will continue; *night and day*, meaning continuance, constantly and perseveringly to acknowledge and worship the Lord God Almighty, as the only true God.

The last inquiry relative to these four beasts, is their natural peculiarities. They are described as the lion; the ox (which critics say is the proper rendering instead of calf). the beast having the face of a man, and the flying eagle.

These I consider as embracing the social and the civil and religious state of the four quarters of the earth.

The Lion is an appropriate symbol of Africa. This is a wild ferocious continent, almost entirely destitute of government or law, its wandering hordes preying upon and destroying each other after the manner of wild beasts.

The Ox is the emblem of *Asia*, patiently and constantly laboring under the yoke of despotism.

The Beast with the man's face, is obviously intended to represent *Europe*. Her civilization, her enlightened governments, and extensive science, are expressed by the man's face, which is always the emblem of intelligence and cultivation.

The flying Eagle is *America*, as distinguished by her civil and religious characteristics; her free, enlightened government, and the light and purity of her Protestant Christianity. It is to be particularly remarked that this flying Eagle, is the last in the catalogue of beasts; and America was the last to take her station amongst the grand divisions of the earth. It is represented in the vision of the prophet as being on the wing, not quiet nor at rest as the other beasts appear to be.

The Eagle's flight is upward, he soars amidst the fires that glare around the face of the sun. How strikingly does this symbol illustrate the history of our own happy country!

She started in her career of glory when the first form of government was set up on these shores. Civil and religious freedom were inherent with her. She was not a dark continent, an inert mass of human ignorance which had to be worked and moulded and formed into civilization. She brought her strength and power with her in the noble principles which separated her from the old world. Her upward flight commenced when she planted her foot on Plymouth rock, and it has continued onward and upward until she lives in the blaze of civil and religious liberty, and shines in the light of science, and the developments of art. Upon all

those continents, and the Islands of the sea, will the power and influence of this Christianity be exerted. Not all at once as we now see it does not, but in its gradual and progressive march, it is destined to reach the most distant habitations of man : *The gospel of this kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come,* Matt. chap. 24.

One more remark upon this vision : and it is one which it is important should be borne in mind.

The term *Heaven* has different significations in the Book of Revelations. It more frequently refers to events and changes in this world than in the next. The door which the prophet saw opened in Heaven, signifies the establishment of the Christian dispensation, which is meant by the term Heaven, and its universal offer of grace and pardon to all, is the door thrown open to all the world to come in and receive its offered salvation.

The next chapter continues the description of what the prophet saw at this time.

CHAPTER V.

1. *And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals.*

2. *And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?*

3. *And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.*

4. *And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.*

5. *And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.*

6. *And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.*

7. *And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.*

8. *And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints.*

9. *And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;*

10. *And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.*

11. *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;*

12. *Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.*

13. *And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.*

14. *And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.*

THE first verse refers to those prophecies of the Old Testament, and to the announcements made by Christ and the evangelists, respecting the trials, afflictions and triumphs of the Church in the course of her progress through the world. These sayings were known to the Christians of the first century as well, if not better, than they have been known since. And they are represented as a book so abounding with its matter, that it is written both within and on the outside. Truly, the book of God's providence, as it is constantly developing itself in the Church and in the world, *within* and *without* his sanctuary, is an overflowing fountain of knowledge and wisdom.

This book is represented as sealed with seven seals. Its contents, or rather the meaning of what had been written, had become obscure and almost lost to the early Church by the indifference and lukewarmness and apostacy which are specially noticed in the warnings the prophet was directed to address to the Seven Churches.

The second verse represents a strong angel proclaiming

with a loud voice, *Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?*

This angel represents the intense anxiety which afterwards animated the Church under the judgments which fell upon the seven delinquent churches of Asia, to learn the cause of the severe and trying providences which often marked the history of his people, and to seek for comfort in a clearer perception of his ways on earth.

No earthly intelligence was found capable of opening this book, or in other words, of fully explaining the mysterious dispensations of God's providence. The prophet wept much that there was none found worthy or able to open and read the book, or even to look upon it.

The prophet's distress on this occasion is the expression of that grief and confusion which sickened the hearts and shook the faith of God's people, when they saw the wicked prosperous and spreading themselves in great power, while the righteous were cast down and oppressed. The anxiety to know why things were so was very natural, and it was quite as natural that they should be distressed and should weep when there was none found who could give the desired instruction.

The prophet's grief is stayed on being assured that there was one who had prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof, *the lion of the tribe of Judah.*

In the midst of the throne and the four beasts and the elders stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. This is the Lord Jesus Christ in his threefold character : the lion of the tribe of Judah is significant of his being the end and object of all the Jewish types and ceremonies ; the tribe of Judah is taken for the whole Jewish nation or church. In his royal character as the root of David, who was the type of that sovereignty and righteous government which Christ exercises over the Christian Church ; and, in his character of sacrificial atonement, a lamb as it had been

slain. In this threefold character he stands in this opening vision of the new dispensation.

He is further represented as having *seven horns* and *seven eyes*, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. Horns are always the emblem of power, as eyes are of knowledge, and these imply that all the power and all the knowledge necessary to the accomplishment of God's purposes, whether of mercy or of judgment, are in Christ, who stands in the midst of the new Christian dispensation,* and who now takes the Book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne, in order to interpret its mysterious contents.

The remaining portion of the chapter is employed in describing the joy and happiness which are expressed when the Lamb takes the Book to open it, and in an ascription of glory to him, in view of the atonement, by which this great multitude are redeemed by his blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation. In the close of this song of triumph from the vast multitude, the ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, the four beasts,—the four grand divisions of Earth bearing this countless multitude,—respond with one voice, *Amen!*

In the fullness of time, when the world was in a state of preparation to appreciate it, the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ was introduced amongst men. The almost boundless dominions of Rome, and her philosophic wisdom, while they exalted her above the nations of the earth, conferred upon her the comprehensive title of "the World."

All the various forms of heathen religion were embraced within her dominions; and, by the toleration which was, at different times, extended to all religions, the freest exercise of their peculiar rites was practiced.

The second century of Christianity found her also at Rome. Her temples and her altars enjoyed equal privileges with those of the heathen worshippers. And from the First Epistle

* Matt. 28 : 18, 19, 20.

to the Corinthians, it seems probable that a very familiar intercourse and good understanding prevailed at that early day between the worshippers in those different temples: Christianity was then in her infancy, and too feeble to excite any alarm in her heathen neighbors. Her principles and tendencies were too little understood to commit her to the denunciations of the heathen temples at Rome.

It is not inconsistent with the divine government to make man the witness against himself, and in favor of God, not only in his own individual case, by his own conscience, but on the broader scale of national advantage does he sometimes compel nations to give an honest judgment in matters between him and them.

It is highly probable that for this very purpose the Providence of God had permitted the unbounded extension of the Roman Empire, by which all the various religions of man's own devising were brought under the eye of Roman philosophy, and were the more easily contrasted with the newly introduced religion that proclaimed the God who created all things as its author.

Although the world by wisdom knows not God, yet the wisdom of Rome at that time was fully capable of instituting a just comparison, and of deciding upon the relative claims of these different religions to imperial favor, upon the ground of national advantage.

The government could readily perceive, by the influence which each system exerted upon its subjects, which of all of them was best calculated to promote peace and establish justice amongst the people.

After many years of severe persecution, during which the temper and principles of Christianity were fully tried, the decision of the Empire was solemnly awarded in favor of the religion of Christ.

But whatever the philosophers of Rome thought of it, the populace entertained a strong prejudice against the new religion. The scenes at Ephesus and Philippi, recorded in the

Acts of the Apostles, furnish a striking picture of the violence and tumult that arose from the progress of the Gospel. The craftsmen employed in the profitable occupations of making magnificent shrines and other requisites for their *Dianas*, saw their gains were in danger of being lost; hence they clamored against Christianity. There doubtless were instances of Emperors whose cruelty and malignity against the Christians became excited entirely by the innovations made upon Paganism; but the greater portion of the sufferings of the Christians was probably brought upon them by the avarice and bigotry of the multitude. We see several instances of this yielding up of innocent and unoffending men by Roman governors to the passions and prejudices of the Jewish mob: *Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas or Jesus which is called Christ?* was the inquiry of Pilate. *And to show the Jews a pleasure, Felix left Paul bound.*

CHAPTER VI.

OPENING OF THE FIRST SEAL.

1. *And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts, saying, Come and see.*

2. *And I saw, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer*

In remarking upon this scene, with a view to its explanation, I should say, that the horse is to be considered as representing the *people;* not the Roman people in general, but those who at that time composed the Church; and that the rider represents Christianity influencing and controlling those who have embraced its doctrines. The color of the horse implies the purity of the faith and doctrines of the Church at that time; it also signifies victory or triumph.

The simple bow of Gospel truth is the only weapon seen in the hand of him that sat upon the horse; but, with this simple armor alone, he went on *conquering, and to conquer.*

This is all that is said of the white horse vision, in reference to its future history; but in this short sentence is embraced the saying of Christ, that this Gospel shall be preached in *all the world.* And it will overthrow all other systems of religion. The bow belongs to the rider; he appears with it in his hands; it is, therefore, the true weapon of his warfare; that is Gospel truth, and by it alone the Pagan system of Rome had been subdued.

But the *crown* was not the inherent right of him that sat on the horse; it is worthy of remark, it was *given*, and therefore it is to be looked for in some future history of the Church.

Very early in the fourth century, the world beheld the novel spectacle of a Christian Emperor upon the throne of the Cæsars! Constantine had renounced Paganism, and embraced the religion of Christ. I have nothing to do with the doubts which have been thrown over the sincerity of his conversion: the effect it produced on the interests of the Church, and the place it holds in the first seal, are all that I have to do with.

The conversion of Constantine certainly brought with it much that might have been expected from an honest and conscientious change of religious opinions. He lost no time in stopping the work of persecution; and, like a Christian, he set about healing the wounds which the Church had suffered from the sword of Pagan power.

Her temples and her altars were restored, and her influence and numbers were greatly increased.

Constantine did not turn the sword of state against Paganism, and resort to the same violence to extirpate it that was formerly used against the Christian religion. He probably considered it safer to let the superior life and character of Christians under the free and full exercise of their religious privileges, now secured to them, undermine and overthrow the ignorance and cruelty of a system from which he had himself been converted by those very means.

The conversion of Constantine did not invest Christianity with that *nationality* which distinguished it at a later period. It did not confer the *crown:* that was given to him who sat upon the white horse. True, his conversion made a wide and deep impression upon the public mind, and greatly changed and reformed the public manners. The *palace* now became the resort, and its luxuries the common indulgence of those bishops, whose humble and pious labors had hitherto

been employed in guiding and instructing their flocks, far from the dangerous honors of courtly favor.

This triumph of Christianity over Paganism, in the very citadel of its power, is illustrated by the victorious symbol of the white horse ; and the simple *bow* of Gospel truth, as the efficient means by which the triumph had been achieved.

Following the history of those times, we shall presently come to that period, and witness that national event which placed the crown upon the rider of the white horse.

The death of Constantine, which occurred A.D. 337, left the empire in the hands of his son Constantius, whose reign was occupied with the wars and civil distractions of his government. He was succeeded by Julian, styled the Apostate.

He commenced his reign at the age of 32. He possessed great powers of mind, and a genius that was equal to every emergency. But as it frequently happened in those times, when war, more than any other occupation, was the business of life, Julian had a short reign. He devoted the time which was not employed in the active duties of the camp, in endeavoring to reinstate Paganism, and to recover the ancient and time-honored religion of the empire, without, however, showing any violence to Christianity, which would have been an impolitic step at that time. The effect that was produced by the conversion of Constantine, was too extensively manifested in the feeling of the nation to allow of any harsh measures against this class of his subjects. He was obliged, therefore, to call into requisition those influences which his great genius was so capable of producing, in order to effect peaceably that which it was dangerous for him to attempt to do by force. But in this effort he signally failed. God had spoken, and even man had given sentence against the abominations of Pagan idolatry. The criminal stood condemned, and awaited only the sentence which was to banish its debased and disgusting form from the Roman world. This sentence was pronounced in the decree of the Roman senate in the reign of

Theodosius, about sixty years after the conversion of Constantine, declaring that "Henceforth Christianity shall be the re-"ligion of the empire." A.D. 388.

Christianity was probably now in a more dangerous position than she was while suffering the persecutions of her former days. She had experienced for two centuries the occasional inflictions of the severest trials from her Pagan enemies. She had been trained in a school of the most painful discipline. But upon the whole it had exertéd a salutary tendency, in pruning the Christian tree, and preventing the exuberant growth of fruitless and injurious branches, which in after ages became the curse of the Church.

No credit is due to the authors of those cruelties for the beneficial effects which grew out of their ferocious policy. Their bloody edicts, issued for the destruction of the Christian religion, were overruled by the Christian's God, and made to serve the cause they were designed to destroy. *He maketh the wrath of man to praise him.*

The increase and prosperity of the Church in the very fires of Roman persecution, are wholly inexplicable upon any other principle than the grace of God in the hearts of his people, and the power of that faith which conquers even death itself. And that Christians in that day possessed this faith in an eminent degree, the Apostle testifies in his epistle to them, in which he extols their constancy, and assures them that *Their faith is spoken of in all the world.*

The Church, like the bush which Moses was called to behold, was in a blaze of fire, but was not a whit consumed. The dross only which Pagan intercourse and society might have produced, was destroyed; but the purity of her doctrine, faith, and practice was preserved inviolate.

But now her situation is greatly changed. She is exalted to the highest station, and associated with the greatest human power known to the world.

A *crown* is given to her; Christianity is enthroned,—she is the *sovereign* religion of the *empire!*

In contemplating this new aspect in which the Church appears before the world, and the effects which resulted from it, we are forcibly reminded of that declaration of our Lord, in his early instruction to his disciples, in these words—*My kingdom is not of this world.*

If this principle of the divine economy could have been constantly kept in view, and rigidly adhered to, the Church would have been in no danger from this exaltation.

But such a thing was scarcely possible in that day. The principles and influence of Paganism were not destroyed, they were constantly upon the watch, and lost no opportunity which the laxity in doctrine or discipline of the Church presented, to seize the advantage it afforded. If the prospect of regaining its former rank and distinction in the empire was entirely lost, the hope yet remained that she might graft herself upon this vine, and partake of its fatness ; in this effort Paganism was but too successful.

The pomp and splendor of the imperial court were adverse to the genius of the Christian religion. The dignitaries of the Church became associated with the lofty grandeur of imperial pride, 'with spiritual wickedness in high places,' where the doctrines of the Gospel were too little understood, or too little esteemed, to check and control the arrogance and scorn with which imperial dignity usually regards the humbler virtues of the Christian character.

When the Church was seated in these high places of wealth, power, and dignity, numbers were led to seek office in her services, whose lives and principles declared them the enemies of the cross of Christ, and who, indeed, were more likely to fill these offices than the humble and pious, who dreaded and shunned the contagion of such associations.

Two or three extracts from history will serve to show the effects which resulted from giving the crown to him that sat upon the white horse.

Amméanus, who was a *heathen philosopher*, contrasting the lives of those bishops who dwelt in Rome, with the lives of

those whose duties were performed in the distant provinces, says :—" At Rome they ride in chariots, attended by a noble " retinue, feasting luxuriously, their tables surpassing those of " kings ; but how much more rationally would they act, if " they imitated the exemplary lives of their poorer brethren, " the bishops of the provinces, in the plainness of their diet " and apparel, the modesty of their looks, and the humility of " their demeanor, walking acceptably with the eternal God, " as his true worshippers."

The historian says of the Church in her new position—" The establishment of Christianity under Theodosius, seemed " to have placed the Catholic Church on an eminence. The " name prevailed, but the glory was departed. The profes-" sion of Christianity had become general, but the power of " it was nearly lost. Ambition, pride, luxury, and all the " evils engendered by *wealth* and *power*, almost universally " prevailed.

" The ceremonies of the Church grew in proportion as the " life of religion was lost. The clergy failed not to make " themselves important ; and the ignorance of the times, and " the established superstitions, regarded *them only* as capable " of approaching the Deity, and obtaining favorable responses. " The compliance with every *Pagan* superstition, which could " be at all reconciled with Christianity, was extended on all " occasions to the utmost excess."*

It must strike every reflecting mind with astonishment, that a Church which had triumphed over the fiercest persecutions of her foes, and had withal rescued the Roman empire from the loathsome rites of Pagan superstition, should so soon begin to decline into the grossest errors and moral depravity. But the secret of all this will be found in the gift of that *crown* which exalted the Church in worldly pride and glory. Step by step she declined from her white horse purity, perhaps unconscious of her downward course, until she had nothing left by which she was distinguished from the old Pagan

* Rom. Univ. Hist. Christianity, Cent. V.

Church, except the outward symbols of Christianity, and the name of a religion which no longer had its power.

This worldly-crowned Church continued to swell and spread herself in pride and ambition, loading her services with empty forms and showy ceremonies, substituting these for the spirit of religion, which had departed from her.

The eye of prophecy follows this Church, and warns the world at different periods of her apostacy, by the symbolic language of the three following seals, against being deceived by her false and spurious pretensions to the character of the true Church of Christ. We are not to suppose that this apostacy left the world without the presence of the true religion. Although the life and power of it had departed from the visible and worldly Church, there was yet a remnant, a little faithful band, who clung to the faith, and maintained the doctrines of their Lord. Their numbers were few, and they seldom came under the notice of the world. They were far away from the pomp and pride, the gaze and the flattery of the great. They were literally the Church in the wilderness ; and there we leave them, and shall not behold them again in the visions of prophecy for a thousand years, but still they are with the use of the simple bow, fulfilling by slow and difficult steps the destiny assigned to the *white horse* power,—they are going on conquering and to conquer.

The visions of the Apocalypse, perhaps in no instance, and certainly not in either of those of the four horses, are intended to represent an event which just occurs, and then ceases. But they are intended to announce the rise of important principles, or influences, which will be found running through a long course of the Church's history, or distinguishing eras of the world's political history.

THE SECOND SEAL.

3. *And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.*

4. *And there went out another horse that was red: and power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.*

The color of the horse in the second seal is in conformity with the turbulence, contentions, and bloodshed which disgraced the Church for several successive centuries; a color denoting an angry and sanguinary state of things.

Her exaltation to national supremacy was followed by theological disputes, as violent in their character as the subjects of them were endless in their variety.

There are three peculiarities described under the second seal.

First,—Taking peace from the earth;

Secondly,—Killing one another; and

Thirdly,—A great sword is given to him that sat upon the horse.

In this, as in the other seals, where the horse is the symbol, the people are to be considered as represented by the horse. The ecclesiastical power was represented by him that sat upon the horse: the change from the white to the red horse, implies the first decided step which the Church has taken in her apostacy. From the state of gospel purity and peace, she has fallen to the warlike and sanguinary temper expressed by the color of the horse.

There is nothing of a *political nature* in this symbol. That the peace of the world should be disturbed and destroyed by the civil commotions and political revolutions which were of such frequent occurrence, was a matter of no astonishment. Wars and rumors of wars were the employment and excite-

ment in which and for which government seemed to exist. But to correct and subdue those angry passions and compose the turbulent spirits of men, was the work which the Christian Church was to perform, in the world. But this seal develops the amazing fact, that instead of these works of peace and good will amongst men, the Church has so far fallen from her faith and steadfastness, that she is actually engaged in taking peace *from the earth!* She has thrown off the meek and quiet spirit of the gospel, and has entered into fierce and angry conflict, thereby destroying the peace of the earth. This state of disorder marked the character of the worldly Church for near three hundred years after the crown was given to her. The history of that period can afford no pleasure to the lovers of religious peace and harmony, and the rehearsal of its events would be both tedious and disgusting. They are eloquently, and no doubt correctly, described by Gibbon, and are portrayed with more or less reprobation by the historians of the Church.

The seat of ecclesiastic and civil power was at this time at Constantinople, and it is said that the Emperor Theodosius found it more difficult to restrain his *spiritual* than his temporal subjects.

Theological feuds rent the Church in every direction. Sects and parties were arrayed against each other, and when argument failed the sword was often unsheathed to enforce or defend the heresy. "Every wind," says Gibbon, "scattered "around the Empire the leaves of controversy, and the voice "of the combatants on a sonorous theatre, re-echoed in the "cells of Palestine and Egypt."

One instance of the manner in which those sectarian controversies were conducted will be sufficient to show, that the temper and spirit of the Church at that time was truly represented by the *red horse;* and that the fruits of her religion, instead of being righteousness and *peace*, were tumult and confusion; taking peace from the earth.

"The first council of Ephesus was convened A.D. 431 to

" consider and decide upon the disputed points respectively " maintained by Nestorius, a Syrian bishop, and Cyril, a dig- " nitary of equal order at Alexandria.

" The rival Primates appeared with retinues of ecclesiastic " and military abettors.

" Nestorius was followed by a band of sturdy slaves armed " and ready for every service of injury or defence. But his " adversary Cyril was more powerful in the weapons both of " the flesh and the spirit. A crowd of peasants, the slaves " of the Church, was poured into the city to support with " blows and clamors a metaphysical argument. The fleet, " which had transported Cyril from Alexandria, was laden " with the riches of Egypt; and he disembarked a numerous " body of mariners, slaves and fanatics, enlisted with blind " obedience under the banner of St. Mark. The council was " hastily convened by Cyril, whose imposing retinue awed " his adversaries whilst it increased his numbers. Nestorius " in vain protested against the premature proceeding of " Cyril, and urged delay, as he looked for support from the " Eastern bishops then on their way to the Council. Cyril " would listen to no proposals for delay although requested " in the name of the Emperor, by his imperial minister, who " was driven with outrage and insult from the Council! The " sentence of condemnation was proclaimed against Nesto- " rius, and was celebrated by the illuminations, the songs, " and the tumult of the night.

" Shortly after the discussion, the Eastern bishops ar- " rived. The unjust and hasty proceedings of Cyril were " represented to them by the imperial minister. With equal " haste and violence the Eastern bishops degraded Cyril and " Memnon from their episcopal honors, and described the " Alexandrian primate as a monster, born and educated for " the destruction of the Church. The vigilance of Memnon " defeated the purpose of the Council in the appointment of " a more worthy shepherd, by causing all the churches to be " shut against them, and a strong garrison to be thiown into

" the cathedral. The troops under the command of Candi-
" dian, the imperial minister, advanced to the assault; the
" outguards were routed and put to the sword, but the place
" was impregnable: the besiegers retired; their retreat was
" pursued by a vigorous sally: they lost their horses, and
" many of the soldiers were dangerously wounded with clubs
" and stones. Ephesus was defiled with rage and clamor,
" with sedition and blood: the rival synods darted anathe-
" mas and excommunications from their spiritual engines;
" and the court of Theodosius was perplexed by the adverse
" and contradictory narratives of the Syrian and Egyptian
" factions. The Emperor employed every means to soothe
" and quiet the belligerent ecclesiastics, but without success.
" The patience of the meek Theodosius was provoked, and he
" dissolved in anger this episcopal tumult. 'God is my wit-
" 'ness,' said the pious prince, 'that I am not the author of
" 'this confusion. His providence will discern and punish the
" 'guilty. Return to your provinces, and may your private
" 'virtues repair the mischief and scandal of your meeting.'"

No picture designed to represent the taking of peace from the earth could more fully effect that object, than the representation of this first Council of Ephesus does. And the sequel of it is as remarkable as the proceedings of the council were: The Emperor, whose word would have filled the world with battle, shocked by the disorderly conduct of those ecclesiastics, solemnly protests before God that he is innocent of the tumult and confusion produced by the council.

I have taken this account of the first Council of Ephesus from Gibbon, with as much abbreviation as is consistent with a clear exposition of the leading facts. I have no reference at all to the merits of the matter in controversy; my only object is, to show that the way they conducted their theological controversies in that day was in perfect accordance with the words of the prophet, *taking peace from the earth.*

The stubborn and intractable spirit of the primates, their scornful rejection of the terms proposed by the Emperor for

the purpose of restoring peace, and their utter contempt of the decencies and proprieties of religion, give melancholy evidence of the mischief produced upon the mind and temper of the Church by the gift of the crown. Taking peace from the earth, by the power and authority of the fallen and worldly-crowned Church, has, unfortunately, survived the days of the Councils, and extended its baleful effects far into after ages.

The second peculiarity of the seal is, *that they should kill one another.*

Peace had been taken from the earth by a power which was *single, undivided,* according to the language of the text. It says, *And power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth.* But the phraseology which expresses the second peculiarity of this seal speaks of more than one. It says, *And that they should kill one another.* It is important to notice this difference in the phraseology of the text; first, the *singular,* and then the *plural,* is used to denote the acting power alluded to. And the two acts referred to are separate and distinct branches of the Church. To meet this change in the seal, we must find at least *two* independent ecclesiastic powers, in open, actual hostility towards each other. These we shall find as the result of the *image war,* as it has been called.

"Pictures and images were exotics in the Christian Church, "and were transplanted from the soil and climate of the "heathen churches." This was done to gain the favor and convert the heathen. The prudential maxim of not putting new wine into old bottles, was, in that instance, carried to unjustifiable and dangerous lengths, as the sequel proved.

These heathen plants soon grew to an enormous size in the new soil of the Christian Church, under the fostering cultivation of superstition and ignorance, which extensively prevailed at that time. The growing reverence, if not actual devotion, which was paid to those images, had reached such

a height, that Jews and Mohammedans began to deride Christianity with being nothing more than old Paganism under a new name !

Leo the Third, no less anxious than Theodosius had been for the peace and prosperity of the Christian Church, was stung by the keen rebukes of the Jews and Mohammedans, and, when relieved from the pressure of state difficulties, set about purging the Church of an idolatrous excrescence which had grown up and mingled itself with her services far beyond what was first intended. When his attention was awakened to the extent of the evil, his zeal allowed of no delay; no terms nor measures proposed by those who favored their continuance in the Church would be listened to, and he proceeded to arrest the dangerous innovation by ordering a lofty statue of Christ, which adorned and consecrated the gate which led to the palace, to be thrown down. The efforts of his officers were violently resisted, and Constantinople was thrown into wild disorder and commotion, which was subdued only by military force. The fierce passions of ignorance and superstition, and the violence of popular enthusiasm, broke loose, on this occasion, like a sudden storm, and threatened the ruin of the city. (A.D. 726.) The uproar and opposition to the Emperor's purpose being quieted, he proceeded with the work of destroying the images.

When he had purged the churches of Constantinople, he sent orders to the *Bishop of Rome* to remove all pictures and images from his churches! This was a firebrand thrown into Rome, which produced an explosion that shook the Empire. Gregory the Second—such was the title of this intrepid primate—was in no way inclined to adopt the Emperor's reformation. He took a firm stand against his measures, and flung back the imperial rescript in the face of the Emperor, with a letter of defiance and contempt! Instead of removing the images from his churches, he *burned the statues of the Emperor!* This was rebellion outright; and the next

step was the open revolt of Italy from the imperial dominions.

The Emperor prepared to chastise his refractory subjects, and to humble the rebellious pontiff ; and Gregory, with equal industry, prepared to maintain his revolt and protect his images. I have nothing to do with this rebellion further than to ascertain that feature of it which illustrates the second peculiarity of the seal. The unity of the Church was now broken, and the designation of Eastern and Western, or the Greek and the Lateran Church, identified these separate hierarchies.

The two rival churches vehemently assailed each other, and each claimed superiority over the other. Rome hurled her anathemas at Constantinople, and asserted her superiority by virtue of authority from St. Peter.

The Patriarch of Constantinople, under the shadow of imperial dignity, scornfully repelled the claims of the Western schismatic, and haughtily maintained the superiority of the Church whose seat was by the throne of the Cæsars !

Thus did the two hierarchies present the sad spectacle of a fierce and rancorous contest for superiority and exclusive ecclesiastic dominion, each endeavoring to undermine the other, and to overthrow his power and influence.

It was in this way, and by their opposing councils on this subject, that they *killed one another*. To suppress or overthrow a government, whether it be of church or state, by defeating or hindering the exercise of its legitimate powers, is, in the figurative language of the Apocalypse, to kill it. The two witnesses, supposed to mean the New and Old Testaments, are said to be killed when their circulation was suppressed, or their teaching and authority were overthrown. In this way Rome labored to kill the Church of Constantinople ; and she, in her turn, exerted herself to kill the Church of Rome.

The arms of Italy were successful in resisting the first attempt of the East to subdue the rebellion of the West, and

in the midst of his triumphs Gregory convened a council to consider and determine what measures should be taken against the Iconoclasts, or the enemies of images. This council of ninety-three bishops were, probably, all of one mind before they met; their deliberations, consequently, were neither long nor laborious. "With their consent, Gre-"gory pronounced a general excommunication against all "who, by word or deed, should attack the tradition of the fa-"thers and the *images of the saints*"! This was the first public and formal act of ecclesiastical sovereignty which was aimed to kill the *Eastern Church;* and this Church, in her turn, some years after, (A.D. 754,) in order to kill the Western Church, summoned a general council at Constantinople, consisting of three hundred and thirty-eight bishops. After six months' deliberation, the council pronounced and subscribed a unanimous decree, "That all visible symbols of "Christ, except in the eucharist, were either blasphemies "or heretical; that image-worship was a corruption of "Christianity and a renewal of Paganism; that all such "monuments of idolatry should be broken or erased, and "that those who should refuse to deliver the objects of their "private superstition, were guilty of disobedience to the au-"thority of the Church and of the Emperor."*

This council was likewise succeeded by another in favor of the images, under the reign of Irene, who had come to the throne by the death of her husband Leo. Irene was devoted to the cause of the images and the avowed enemy of the Iconoclasts. She resolved that the images should be again restored to the churches. "But as the decrees of a general "council could only be repealed by a similar assembly, another "council, the second Council of Nice, was convened, composed "of three hundred and fifty bishops (A.D. 787). They unan-"imously pronounced that the *worship of images is agreeable to* "*Scripture* and reason, to the Fathers and Councils of the "Church!

* Gibbon..

"The decision of this Council was approved and rigorous-"ly executed by the despotism of Irene. During the five "succeeding reigns, a period of thirty-eight years, the contest "was maintained, with unabated rage and various success, "between the worshippers and the breakers of images."*

These official and paramount acts of Church authority, each aimed to kill the other, fully meet the second peculiarity of the Seal, while they continue also to take peace from the earth.

From first to last the biting and devouring of one another by those two Churches filled the annals of ecclesiastical history for more than a century.

The Seals confine themselves to those events which make the history of the Church, and exclude those occurrences, however remarkable or important, that form the current of civil or political history.

The wars that followed the revolt of Italy were prosecuted with sanguinary violence and with great destruction of human life. In one of those battles fought for the recovery of the revolutionary province, it is said the Po was so stained with human blood that for several years the prejudice of the people rejected the use of the fish of that river. But, as before said, the Seal has nothing to do with that aspect of the history.

This image contest, as we have seen, led to the revolt of Rome, and this in its turn introduced events that brought about the *gift of the great sword* to him that sat upon the horse.

In order to understand fairly the circumstances which mark the gift of this sword, we shall have to trace the course of history a little, as political causes and effects had much to do with the gift of the sword.

By this revolutionary step, Rome became separated from the protection of the empire, and brought upon herself fresh and unexpected troubles from a neighboring power. Astol-

* Gibbon.

phus, the king of the Lombards, resolved to profit by the event and promptly subdued Ravenna and added it to his dominion. He next summoned Rome to acknowledge his sovereignty and submit to an annual tribute.

Gregory had descended to the tomb, and Stephen had now to contend with the ambitious Lombard. Stephen may have been a better Pope than Gregory, but he was a very inferior man in all those requisites which the distracted state of his affairs called for. But although he felt himself unequal to the crisis, he resolved never to submit to the humiliating demands of Astolphus. Without meeting the summons of the barbarian with that scornful defiance with which Gregory would have treated it, he resolved upon a course which he hoped would better serve his purpose and maintain his independence. To gain time, Stephen alternately persuaded and remonstrated with the haughty Lombard, but finding all efforts to change his purpose unavailing, he proceeded in person to solicit the aid of Pepin, monarch of France.

Charles Martel had acquired a renown from the defeat of the Saracens, which his grandson Pepin was glad of an opportunity of maintaining as a family inheritance.

It may not be out of place here to remark upon the love of military glory which has, ever since the days of Charles Martel, distinguished the French nation. From these early days of her history this nation has generally evinced a readiness, if not an eagerness for war, any where or with any people, from the greatest power of Europe down to the wild Arabs of the desert! The glory of the battle field has always been with her the highest glory of human ambition. In her estimate of national prosperity, peace was death; and war was life! With this national and peculiar constitutional temperament, we might reasonably expect that she would, as she really does, hold a conspicuous station in the scenes of the Apocalypse. But to return to the affairs of Italy.

Stephen found Pepin ready to acquiesce in his petition for aid, and very soon the arms of France compelled the Lom-

bard to restore the possessions of the Church, which his ambition had grasped, and to promise due respect to her rights for the future. This submission continued as long as Pepin remained in Italy. On his departure, the faithless Lombard renewed his conquests and his insolent demands upon Rome. It is always painful to a man of delicate sensibilities to trouble others with whatever difficulties or distresses he may be embarrassed with; and it was upon this ground, probably, that Stephen felt reluctant to call upon his former deliverer so soon again. He therefore invoked the aid of Pepin in his second emergency in the NAME and by the *authority of St. Peter*, whose tomb and temple were again threatened by the barbarian. Pepin promptly obeyed the summons of St. Peter, and speedily chastised Astolphus in a manner which caused him to respect his treaty obligations better than he had done before.

The Lombard kingdom severely felt those French chastisements, and its power was humbled under its submission to Rome. But still its hostility to Rome remained, and frequent sallies upon her peace and safety gave much annoyance to the patrimony of St. Peter.

Finally, all those busy actors in the scenes of this world, passed away. Stephen III. was succeeded by Adrian I., the Lombard crown descended to Désederius, and the French monarchy came under the authority of Charlemagne.

Désederius resolved to restore the ancient power of the Lombard kingdom, and to recover all that had been lost by his predecessors. Like them, too, he felt a burning ambition to be the master of Rome. Adrian followed the example of those who had preceded him, and called upon France in the day of his trouble. Charlemagne gladly embraced the opportunity of displaying his military prowess upon the theatre of Rome's ancient glory; and without delay he spread his irresistible armies over the plains of Italy.

Désederius, unable to stand the shock of Charlemagne's forces, withdrew from the field, and enclosed himself within

the walls of Pavia. He sustained himself during a long siege, but was at length compelled to surrender, by a pestilence which obliged him to throw open the gates of his capital to the conqueror.

Thus a final end was put to the kingdom of the Lombards. These transactions brought about the exercise of mutual acts of favor and liberality between the popes and the kings of France, by which each acknowledged the sovereignty, and exalted the dignity of the other.

The authority of the king was exercised by Pepin while he was only mayor of the palace. Childeric being incompetent to the duties of royalty, Pepin became impatient for the crown which he could not wear while Childeric occupied the seat of sovereignty.

Aware of the great importance which Rome attached to the friendship of the French throne, exposed as she was to the sword of the Lombard, and cut off from the aid of the empire by her late revolt, Pepin seized the favorable opportunity of securing the object of his ambition. He proposed to Pope Zachary the grave question, Whether he who had the title, or he who executed the authority of king, should wear the crown? Zachary was as prompt in discovering on which side of this question his own interests lay, as he was in answering it. The decision was in favor of Pepin; and it was accordingly ordered that Childeric should be degraded, shaved, and confined in a monastery for the remainder of his days.

Pepin and Charlemagne, as has been stated, successively interposed their power to relieve Rome from the oppression of the Lombards. And Pepin, who had first subdued the barbarian kingdom, conferred the whole of its dominions upon the Pope in absolute sovereignty. But Astolphus violated his engagements after Pepin had retired from Italy, and renewed the war against Rome. Charlemagne renewed the blows by which his father had formerly subdued the Lombard power, and completed the overthrow of the kingdom. Rome

was sensible of the obligations which the generous acts of Pepin and his son Charlemagne had imposed upon her, and she acknowledged them in conferring the dignity of King of France, and Patrician of Rome, upon the Carlovingian family.

These are small points in the great field of history, but from these sprang important events in the future history of the Church and the world.

The extensive dominions which had been conquered from the crown of Lombardy, and given in full sovereignty to the Pope, laid the foundation of the vast superstructure of the temporal power of the Popedom, while the dignity and title of "Kings of France, and Patrician of Rome," given by the Popes to the Carlovingian family, was the first step on the part of the Church in the political lewdness for which she became so distinguished in after ages.

The picture of the woman on the scarlet-colored beast, (chap. 17,) is a vivid illustration from the pencil of prophecy of the abomination and corruption which this anti-Christian intercourse with the kings of the earth involved the Church in.

But the remaining point in the history of those transactions, is the one which belongs particularly to the second seal.

When Charlemagne made his last visit to Rome, he was crowned by Pope Leo in the great temple of St. Peter, and, amidst the acclamations of an enthusiastic multitude, *Emperor of Rome!* The Pope saluted the emperor whom he had just created, and the people, with the wildest shouts of enthusiasm and devotion, echoed the salutation,—"Long life and "victory to Charles, the most pious Augustus; crowned by "God! the great and pacific Emperor of the Romans." This was an act of creating sovereignty, and conferring empire beyond any that the Church had performed before, and we shall find special reference made to it in chap. 13. "The corona-"tion oath, subscribed to by Charlemagne on this illustrious "occasion, represents a pledge to maintain the *faith* and *pri-"vileges* of the Church."

This august transaction renewed and introduced to the world the *western Roman empire!* And the oath of Charlemagne, its first Cæsar, to support and defend the Roman religion, illustrates the *gift of the great sword*, the third peculiarity of the second seal. A.D. 799.

The history of Charlemagne's government claims the title, and maintains the character of—*a great sword!* Wherever his sword fell, it conquered; and where it conquered, the religion of Rome was established. This sword was not a temporary power which was to end with the life of Charlemagne. Its employment may be seen, and the blood it shed in support of the Romish Church, may be traced through the history of succeeding ages. Besides its use by the different monarchs who felt it their duty to slay the enemies of the Church within their own respective dominions, we see its broad and destructive sweep upon a grander scale, in the wild and fanatical *crusades* for the conquest of Jerusalem, and at a later period in the persecution and slaughter of the Albigenses and Waldenses.

By the wonderful changes which have been produced in the world, through the reformation of its religion, especially in the 18th century, and since, the use of this great sword has been very much diminished. Better views of Christianity, and the more enlightened reason of men, have rendered such means of propagating or supporting religion odious and unpopular.

They that use the sword shall perish by the sword, is a maxim of holy writ, and, like all other maxims of that book, cannot fail of being accomplished; and the evidence of its progressive fulfillment has for the last fifty years visibly impressed itself upon the face of European history; and before the future lapse of a similar period of time, the full import of that maxim will be seen by all nations in the wreck and ruin of those systems, both civil and ecclesiastic, that depend upon the sword for their support.

The application of this second seal to the Church, under the

three aspects in which history represents her at this time, seems to be clear and unavoidable.

In the first place, when he who sat upon the red horse is represented as taking peace from the earth, it is a *single* power which is thus employed : *And power was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth.* This applies to that period in the history of the Church, when faction and dissension struggled and wrangled with each other in endless disputes and controversies, which often amounted to violence and bloodshed, as in the Council of Ephesus before cited, and other instances, which for the sake of brevity are omitted.

In the second place, it is said : *And that they might kill one another.* This represents the Church after she was broken in twain, in consequence of the measures adopted by the Emperor against images. The two Churches, the East and the West, immediately set to work by councils and anathemas, to *kill one another!* And lastly the one power is resumed by the text, and is referred to as follows, viz. *And there was given unto him that sat thereon a great sword.* The Church that received this gift of the great sword, had become a *single*, supreme, and independent power. This accords exactly with history. After the revolt of Italy, the Western Church, under her Popes, was recognised by the French monarchs, and other powers, as the Christian Church.

The Church of Rome soon eclipsed, and rose superior to the Eastern Church, assuming and maintaining the distinctive appellation of *the Church!* And in this sovereign, independent, and single character, the gift of the great sword by Charlemagne was made to her. This does not imply that the Popes or Bishops in their own persons, or with their own hands, actually wielded the sword, but that it was used by kings in sustaining and enforcing the doctrines and decrees of that Church upon all dissenting nations and people.

It is impossible that this seal can have any reference to the rise of Mohammedanism. It cannot be applied to that event without doing violence to the text.

Mohammedanism never acknowledged any affinity with Christianity; it was always its implacable enemy. The peculiarity of the Christian religion is its constant purpose to establish peace in the earth. But this and the following seals are designed to show the apostacy of the Church as manifested by taking peace from the earth. This is one of the marks of that *falling away*, so emphatically declared by St. Paul, in warning the Church of the dangerous influence of worldly ambition.

Mohammed took peace from the earth, it is true; but that was in accordance *with* his religion; it was nothing strange; he avowed his purpose of spreading his religion by the sword.

Besides, there was nothing in the progress of the Mohammedan religion answering to the second branch of the seal, viz. *that they might kill one another.*

Whatever quarrels may have arisen amongst the Caliphs, after the death of Mohammed, they were in every instance of a political nature. Nothing ever divided the Mohammedan faith; it was always one and the same. The Mohammedan Church suffered no schisms; its faith ever remained one and the same—"One God, and Mohammed his prophet." An identity of character has always distinguished the religion of the Koran.

But least of all, is it possible to apply the last feature of the seal to Mohammedanism, "the gift of the great sword."

It is manifest that this great sword did not belong to him that sat upon the red horse; it was *given*, bestowed; it came from some other power, to enable him that sat upon the red horse to maintain his rule and authority in the earth.

Nothing of all this applies to Mohammed. The sword was not a gift to him; it was his from the beginning; his whole system of religion was founded upon the sword as the means of converting the nations to the faith of the Koran. He came out before the world sword in hand, and waving it before the nations, announced to them boldly, "The Koran,

"or the sword as its alternative!" I have said this much, just here, for the purpose of removing from this seal the Mohammedan difficulties with which some commentators have embarrassed it.

The far-seeing eye of prophecy could not fail to see the rise of the Mohammedan Empire; and the prophet will show us, in its proper place, under the second trumpet, the grandeur and terror that distinguished the appearance and progress of that power. We shall see Mohammed, an obscure Arab, breaking the bonds of Pagan idolatry and superstition, rising superior to his obscure and low condition, and by his own indomitable genius, cutting his way, with his own sword, to empire and renown.

THE THIRD SEAL.

5. *And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo, a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.*

6. *And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.*

This seal has been understood and explained in various ways; almost as many different opinions have been expressed about it as there have been writers on the Revelations.

One explains it to signify the reign of Septimius Severus, one of the Roman Emperors, whose laws were extremely rigid in exacting the strictest justice, and imposing the severest penalties for their violation. The balances are regarded as emblematic of the equitable rule upon which his laws were based.

Another writer expounds the seal to be a representation of the scarcity that prevailed in the second century, in the reign of the Antonines, and the balances accordingly are to show the scanty supply and the dear rate at which men would obtain their food.

Others have selected famines of a later date as illustrations of the seal; and the black horse, they think, agrees very well with a black or extremely severe famine; and the command, which their theory understands as directing special care to be taken of the oil and wine, shows that those articles are also to be used under great restriction even amongst the more opulent orders of society. Now I consider that none of these views gives the true import of the seal.

In the first place, they entirely confound the order of prophetic revelation. This is the *third* seal, and its peculiar events must follow, in order of time, the events of the two preceding seals. But these explanations carry this seal back to the early days of the Church, and place it before the events which distinguish the white and the red horse seals. Instead of explanation, this is mere confusion.

But if I am correct in supposing that the seals are employed to express, in the first instance, the triumph of the Christian Church over the Pagan religion of Rome, and afterwards the successive stages of her *apostacy*, then the references to famines, or the establishment of rigid laws for the enforcement of justice, are out of the question as explanations of this seal; for neither of these have any relation to the prosperity or apostacy of the Church.

This seal represents the dark age of the world, and of Christianity in particular, when her light was greatly obscured, from the eighth century down to the Reformation, and the moral and intellectual condition of the people corresponded with the color of the horse, and presented a similar state to that of the Jewish people, as described by one of their prophets, *Darkness hath covered the earth, and gross darkness the minds of the people.* The horse, as before stated, in explaining the two preceding seals, is still the representative of the people. In civil and ecclesiastic governments, the people carry those who rule over them.

The purpose of this seal is to illustrate that period in the

apostacy of the Church when there will be a public, authorised practice of *merchandising* in the doctrines and services of the Church. It reflects the practical illustration of St. Peter's prediction, *And through covetousness shall they with feigned (false) words make merchandise of you.* (1 Eph. 11 : 3.) The forgiveness of sins will be sold, and heaven will be secured by purchase for *money:*

The balances in the hand of him that sat upon the horse are the emblems of trade, traffic and dealing. Various qualities of merchandise are offered, and prices adapted to the different qualities are named. All this particularity in the seal is intended to impress the mind with its true import,—that it represents a system of *selling* on the part of the Church and of *buying* by the people.

The articles offered, wheat and barley, imply the doctrines of the Church ; they are sound scriptural doctrines, and were the gift of God to man for salvation. But the rulers of the Church have taken them into their own hands, made them their own exclusive property, and now sell them to the people for money, thereby converting the grace of God and the doctrines of the Gospel into a corrupt system of merchandising. It is admitted that sound scriptural doctrines were held by this apostate Church, as wheat and barley are nutritious and wholesome food. But this does not change the corrupt character of the traffic or trade in these articles. Indeed, it is the very thing that St. Paul denounces in the 1st chapter of Romans, 18th verse, *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men; who hold the truth in unrighteousness;* 25th ver., *who changed the truth of God into a lie.* By this we learn that a church may hold all the essential doctrines of the Gospel, and yet pervert them to the most unrighteous purposes, and, by their traditions, and feigned (or false) words, may convert the *truth of God into a lie.*

This unholy merchandising in the Church had discovered itself in the earlier ages of her apostasy. Monkish avarice,

acting upon popular superstition, had imparted a spiritual value to a thousand worthless and disgusting objects, such as bones, relics, splinters of wood and fragments of old garments. The possession of these things became, at length, almost the only dependence of the deluded people for salvation, and they paid for them according to the great value they were taught to believe they possessed. To these were also added prayers for the dead; effectual, it was said, in mitigating or shortening the pains of purgatory; this, too, was part and parcel of the system of merchandising.

Those means of priestly aggrandisement were in accordance with the ignorance and superstition of the times in which they prevailed. The minds of the people were too much in darkness, and the principles of the priestly order were too sordid, for the one to discover or the other to check their progress; their tendency was to multiply, because they were profitable.

But this merchandising was confined to a low and inferior grade of commodities; it did not reach the summit of that authority and power which are seen in the seal. The Apocalypse passes over inferior objects, and seizes upon the most exalted events, in delineating the history of the future.

There is no evidence that the supreme authority of the Church had appointed the priestly trade referred to. It might have been nothing more than the suggestions of artful and avaricious monks. But we must look to a higher position for the authority that gave the balances to him that sat upon the black horse, and appointed a public and unscrupulous system of merchandising in the doctrines of Christianity. This authority is found in the act of Leo X., *directing the sale of* INDULGENCES.

It is of no consequence how the proceeds of these Indulgencies were to be applied. Whether they were used to complete the gorgeous and unequalled structure of St. Peter at Rome, or to enrich the coffers, and aggrandise the wealth of the Pontiffs, the monstrous and impious command went

forth, guaranteeing impunity to sins, which God had forbidden, and assuming on the part of the Church that power which belongs to God alone, the forgiveness of sins! To warn the world of this fearful depth of apostacy, was the design of this seal.

The following extracts are from the history of the times when the seal was fully illustrated.

I quote from D'Aubigné's History of the Reformation; a work of great interest, and full of facts upon every matter on which the learned author writes.

I have nothing to do, however, with the detail of those scenes which disgraced the Church under the circumstances, and at the period referred to by the third seal. The purpose of these extracts is to show the conformity of the seal with the *merchandising* practice of the Church, first by the monks and priests, in relics, crosses, &c., and afterwards by the Popes upon the broader scale of indulgences:—

"The penitential works substituted for the salvation of "God, were multiplied in the Church from Tertullian down "to the thirteenth century. Men were required to fast, to "go barefoot, to wear no linen, &c., to quit their homes and "their native land for distant countries, or to renounce the "world and embrace a monastic life.

"In the eleventh century, voluntary flagellations were su-"peradded to these practices. Somewhat later, they became "quite a mania in Italy, which was then in a very disturbed "state: Nobles and peasants, old and young, even children "of five years of age, whose only covering was a cloth tied "round the middle, went in pairs, by hundreds, thousands, "and tens of thousands, through the towns and villages, vis-"iting the churches in the depth of winter. Armed with "scourges, they flogged each other without pity, and the "streets resounded with cries and groans, that drew tears "from all who heard them.

"Still long before the disease had reached such a height, "the priest-ridden world had sighed for deliverance. The

"priests themselves had found out that if they did not apply "a remedy, their usurped power would slip from their hands. "They accordingly invented that system of barter, celebrated "under the title of *Indulgences!* They said to their peni-"tents, 'you cannot accomplish the tasks imposed on you. "'Well, we the priests of God, and your pastors, will take "'this heavy burden upon ourselves. For a seven weeks' "'fast,' said Regius, abbot of Prum, 'you shall pay twenty "'pence, if you are rich; ten, if less wealthy; and three "'pence if you are poor; and so on for other matters.'"

The Pope soon discovered what advantages could be derived from these *Indulgences.* This traffic soon became extended and complicated. The Pope by a bull annexed purgatory to his domain. In that place he declared men would have to expiate sins that could not be expiated here on earth, but that *Indulgences* would liberate their souls from that intermediate state in which their sins would detain them.

"Somewhat later, in order to reduce this traffic to a sys-"tem, they invented the celebrated and scandalous *Tariff of "Indulgences,* which has gone through more than forty edi-"tions. The least delicate ears would be offended by an "enumeration of all the horrors it contains. * * * * "There was a stated price for murder, infanticide, adultery, "perjury, burglary, &c.

"Boniface VIII., the most daring and ambitious pontiff "after Gregory VII., was enabled to effect still more than "his predecessors. In the year 1300, he published a bull in "which he declared to the Church, that every hundred years "all who made a pilgrimage to Rome should receive a *ple-"nary indulgence!* From all parts people flocked in crowds, "and in one month two hundred thousand pilgrims visited "Rome. All these strangers brought rich offerings, and the "Pope and the Romans saw their coffers replenished. Ro-"man avarice soon fixed each Jubilee at fifty, then at thirty-"three, and lastly at twenty-five years' intervals. Then, for "the greater convenience of purchasers, and the greater pro-

"fit of the sellers, both the *Jubilee* and its *indulgences* were "transported from Rome to every market in Christendom. "It was no longer necessary to leave one's home. What "others had gone in search of beyond the Alps, each man "could now buy at his own door.

"Penances might be compounded for with money. The "people, therefore, brought to the convents and to the priests, "money and every thing that had any value,—fowls, ducks, "geese, eggs, wax, straw, butter, and cheese.

"In the Church of All Saints, at Wittemburg, was shown "a fragment of *Noah's ark*, some *soot* from the furnace into "which the three Hebrews were cast, a piece of wood from "the cradle of Jesus Christ, some hair from the beard of St. "Christopher, and nineteen thousand other relics of greater "or less value! At Schaffhausen was exhibited the *breath* "of St. Joseph, that Nicodemus had received in his *glove!* "In Wurtemberg you might meet a seller of *indulgences* vend-"ing his merchandise, his head adorned with a large feather "plucked from the wing of St. Michael. * * * Men "who *farmed the relics* traversed the whole country hawking "them about the rural districts, and carrying them to the "houses of the faithful, to spare them the trouble and expense "of a pilgrimage. * * * These wandering hawkers paid "a stipulated sum to the owners of the relics—a per centage "on their profits. The kingdom of heaven had disappeared, "and in its place a market of abominations had been opened "upon earth. A great agitation prevailed at that time "among the German people. The Church had opened a vast "market upon earth. From the crowds of purchasers, and "the shouts and jokes of the sellers, it might have been called "a fair, but a fair conducted by monks. The *merchandise* "that they were extolling, and which they offered at a re-"duced price, was, said they, *the salvation of souls!*

"These dealers traversed the country in a handsome car-"riage, accompanied by three horsemen, living in great state, "and spending freely. * * * When the procession ap-

"proached a town, a deputy waited on the magistrate, and "said, '*The grace of God* and of the holy Father is at your "'gates.' Instantly everything was in motion in the place. "The clergy, the priests and nuns, the council, the school-"masters and their pupils, the trades with their banners, men "and women, young and old, went out to meet these mer-"chants, bearing lighted tapers in their hands, and advanc-"ing to the sound of music, and tolling of bells; 'so that "'they could not have received God himself with greater "'honor,' says an historian. The salutations being ex-"changed, the procession moved towards the church. The "Pontiff's bull of grace was carried in front on a velvet "cushion, or on cloth of gold. The chief of the indulgence "merchants came next, holding a large red wooden cross in "his hand.

"One person in particular attracted the attention of the "spectators at these sales. It was he who carried the red "cross and who played the chief part. This man was John "Tetzel. * * * * He had from the year 1502 uninterrupt-"edly filled the office of dealer in indulgences. * * * *

"When the cross had been erected and arms of the Pope "suspended from it, Tetzel went into the pulpit and with a "tone of assurance began to extol the value of indulgences, "in the presence of a crowd whom the ceremony had at-"tracted to the holy place. * * * * Let us listen to one "of the harangues he delivered after elevating the cross.

"'Indulgences (said he) are the most precious and the "'most noble of God's gifts. This cross (pointing to the "'red cross) has as much efficacy as the very cross of Jesus "'Christ.

"'Come and I will give you letters all properly sealed by "'which even the sins *that you intend* to commit may be "'pardoned. I would not change my privileges for those of "'St. Peter in heaven, for I have saved more souls by my "'*indulgences* than the Apostle by his sermons. There is no "'sin so great that an indulgence cannot remit * * * *—

" 'only let him *pay well* and all will be forgiven him.' * * *

"Tetzel then passed to another subject.

" 'But more than this,' said he, 'indulgences avail not " 'only for the living, but for the dead. For that repent- " 'ance is not even necessary.

" 'Priest! noble! merchant! wife! youth! maiden! do you " 'not hear your parents and your other friends who are " 'dead, and who cry from the bottom of the abyss: "We " ' "are suffering horrible torments! a trifling alms would " ' "deliver us: you can give it, and you will not." All " 'shuddered at these words uttered by the thundering voice " 'of the impostor monk.

" 'At the very instant,' continued Tetzel, '*that the money* " '*rattles at the bottom of the chest, the soul escapes from purga-* " '*tory!* and flies liberated to heaven!

" 'O stupid and brutish people who do not understand the " 'grace so richly offered! Now heaven is everywhere " 'opened! Do you refuse to enter now? When then will " 'you enter? Now you can ransom so many souls! * * * " 'Stiffnecked and thoughtless man, with twelve groats you " 'can deliver your father from purgatory, and you are un- " 'grateful enough not to save him! I shall be justified in " 'the day of judgment; but you—you will be punished so " 'much the more severely for having neglected so great sal- " 'vation. I declare to you though you should have but a " 'single coat, you ought to strip it off and sell it in order to " 'obtain this grace. * * * The Lord our God no longer " 'reigns. He has resigned all power to the Pope.'

"The orator next turned against the cavillers and traitors "who opposed his work: 'I declare them excommunicated!' "exclaimed he. Then addressing the docile souls, and making "an impious application of scripture he exclaimed: 'Blessed " 'are the eyes which see the things that ye see: for I tell you " 'that many prophets and kings have desired to see these " 'things which ye see and have not seen them: and to hear " 'those things which ye hear, and have not heard them!'

"And in conclusion, pointing to the strong box in which "the money was received, he generally finished his pathetic "discourse by three appeals to his auditory: 'Bring—bring "'—bring!' He used to shout these words with such a "horrible bellowing that one would have said it was a mad "bull rushing on the people and goring them with his horns. "When his speech was ended, he left the pulpit, ran towards "the money box, and, in sight of all the people, flung in a "piece of money, taking care that it should rattle loudly. "The speech being concluded, the indulgence was considered "as 'having established its throne in the place with due "'solemnity.' Then thronged the crowd around the confes- "sors. Each came with a piece of money in his hand. Men, "women, and children, the poor, and even those who lived "on alms—all found money.

"'As for those,' said they, 'who wish to deliver souls from "'purgatory and procure the pardon of all their offences, let "'them put money into the chest; contrition of heart or "'confession of mouth is not necessary. Let them only "'hasten to bring their money; for thus will they perform a "'work most useful to the souls of the dead, and to the "'building of the church of St. Peter.'

"The confession over, and that was soon done, the faithful "hastened to the vendor. One alone was charged with the "sale. His stall was near the cross. He cast inquiring "looks on those who approached him. He examined their "manner, their gait, their dress, and he required a sum pro- "portionate to the appearance of the individual who pre- "sented himself. Kings, queens, princes, archbishops, bish- "ops, were, according to the scale, to pay *twenty-five* ducats "for an ordinary indulgence. Abbots, counts and barons, "*ten*. The other nobles, rectors, and all those who possessed "an income of five hundred florins, paid *six*. Those who "had two hundred florins a-year paid *one*, and others only a "*half*."

These different grades of prices to be paid for the indul-

gences, holds a striking correspondence with that particular feature in the Seal which shows the various rates demanded in this merchandising. *A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny.* Although in the text different qualities of grain are named, these are merely used as signs of that distinction which was seen in the practice of the traffic.

The thing sold by these merchants was the same always; it never varied; it was always an indulgence; a forgiveness of sin. But the variations were in the *prices* demanded from persons of different rank and condition in life. The difference in the quality of the grain it seems was designed to express exactly this difference made in the price between purchasers of a higher and a lower rank in society; and to make the picture resemble as nigh as possible the reality. This traffic was pushed in every direction with untiring zeal by Tetzel in Germany, and Samson in Switzerland. These indefatigable men evinced an ardor in this unholy work which no difficulty could subdue, nor any exposure, however ludicrous, could check. Although they were not allowed to enter into the territories of some of the princes of Germany, and were driven from some of the Cantons of Switzerland, they generally found means to reach those forbidden grounds in some secret manner so as to extort money from the people. "There was no vein of gold," the historian says, "but what "these merchants found the means of working."

Their traffic sometimes reacted upon themselves, in a way that would have abashed men not as much resolved as they were to get money at all hazards. The two following instances are from D'Aubigné :—

"The indulgence-merchants had visited Hagenan in 1517. "The wife of a shoemaker procured a letter of indulgence "contrary to her husband's will, and had paid a gold florin. "She died shortly after. As the husband had not caused a "mass to be said for the repose of her soul, the priest charged "him with contempt of religion, and the magistrate of Hage-

"nan commanded him to appear in court. The shoemaker "put his wife's indulgence in his pocket, and went to answer "the accusation. 'Is your wife dead?' asked the magistrate. "'Yes,' replied he. 'What have you done for her?' 'I "'have buried her body, and commended her soul to God.' "'But have you had a mass said for the repose of her soul?' "'I have not, it was of no use,—she entered heaven at the "'moment of her death.' 'How do you know that?' "'Here is the proof.' As he said these words, he drew the "indulgence from his pocket, and the magistrate, in presence "of the priest, read in so many words, that, at the moment "of her death, the woman who received it would not go into "purgatory, but would at once enter into heaven. 'If the "'reverend gentleman maintains that a mass is still neces- "'sary,' added the widower, 'my wife has been deceived by "'our most holy father the Pope; if she has not been, it is "'the priest who deceives me.' This pithy argument non- "plussed the priest, and acquitted the shoemaker.

"A Saxon nobleman, who had heard Tetzel at Leipsic, was "much displeased by his falsehoods. Approaching the monk, "he asked him if he had the power of pardoning sins that "men have an *intention* of committing. 'Most assuredly,' "replied Tetzel, 'I have received full powers from his holi- "'ness for that purpose.' 'Well, then,' answered the noble- "man, 'I am desirous of taking a slight revenge on one of "'my enemies without endangering his life. I will give you "'ten crowns if you will give me a letter of indulgence that "'shall fully justify me.' Tetzel made some objections; they "came, however, to an arrangement by the aid of thirty "crowns. The monk quitted Leipsic shortly after. The no- "bleman and his attendants lay in wait for him in a wood be- "tween Juterlrock and Treblin; they fell upon him, gave "him a slight beating, and took away the well stored indul- "gence chest the inquisitor was carrying with him. Tetzel "made a violent outcry, and carried his complaint before the "courts. But the nobleman showed the letter which Tetzel

"had signed himself, and which exempted him beforehand "from every penalty. Duke George, whom this action had "at first exceedingly exasperated, no sooner read the docu-"ment than he ordered the accused to be acquitted."

But the end of all this was to excite the public indignation, and open the eyes of the people. The frauds and impositions so grossly practised upon them by the *ministers of religion*, led to doubts as to the truth of such a religion. The more they inquired, the more they became convinced that the religion which sanctioned such things could not be of God.

The historian says :—"This traffic everywhere occupied "men's thoughts, and was everywhere talked of. It was the "topic of conversation in castles, in academies, and in burgh-"er's houses, as well as taverns, inns, and all places of public "resort."

"Stories were told of the gross and immoral conduct of "the traffickers in indulgences. To pay their bills to the car-"riers who transported them and their merchandise, the inn-"keepers with whom they lodged, or whoever had done them "any service, they gave a letter of indulgence for *four souls*, "or five, or for any number according to circumstances. "Thus these *certificates of salvation* circulated in the inns and "markets, like bank notes or other paper money ! 'Pay ! "'pay !' said the people, 'that is the head, belly, tail, and "'all the contents of their sermons.'"

"A miner of Schneeberg met a seller of indulgences. "'Must we credit,' asked he, 'what you have so often told "'us of the power of indulgences, and of the papal authority, "'and believe that we can, by throwing a penny into the "'chest, ransom a soul from purgatory ?' The merchant "affirmed it was so. 'Ah !' resumed the miner, 'what a "'merciless man, then, the Pope must be, since for want of a "'wretched penny, he leaves a poor soul crying in the flames "'so long ! If he has no ready money, let him store up "'some hundred thousand crowns, and deliver all these souls

" 'at once. We poor people would very readily repay him
" 'both interest and capital.' "

These instances of dissatisfaction on the part of the people, serve to show a state of ripeness in the public mind for the Reformation. Not only were they heartily disgusted with the impositions and immoralities of these merchants of the Church, but the more sagacious part of society did not fail to discover the danger which attended the sale of these indulgences. They saw that, if impunity could thus be procured for any crime a man might be prompted by *avarice* or *revenge* to commit, no one's *life* or *property* was safe: The arm of civil authority was paralysed by the force of an indulgence, as seen in the case of the Saxon nobleman.

The Reformation sprung up amidst those scenes of delusion and corruption, and it received a great impetus from the dissatisfaction and disgust which the public feeling had imbibed from the dissolute practices of these ministers of the Romish Church. And here is made manifest the meaning of the second branch of the seal: *And thou hurt not the oil and the wine.* Instead of destroying the true religion which was adhered to by thousands of honest and faithful souls, even amidst this sea of corruption, the merchandising of the fallen and corrupt Church proved the occasion of bringing out and establishing, through the Reformation, the Protestant religion, the Church of Christ, in which the *oil and the wine*, the life and *power of godliness*, are the light and the glory of her people.

Taking this third seal in the full scope of its historical allusion, I regard it as a perfect exemplification of the prediction of St. Paul in the 2d Thess. 2: 8–12 inclusive:—*And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his wrath, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders! And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might*

be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie. That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

The seal has another peculiarity, which is the assurance, that the true Gospel Church will not suffer by the corrupt example of the mercenary Church. The language of this assurance, as it stands in the text, is—*See thou hurt not the oil and the wine.*

It is hardly necessary to say to those who are familiar with the frequent use of metaphors in the Bible to illustrate the power and principles of the gospel, that oil and wine are the invariable emblems of the joy and hope, the comfort and the light, enjoyed by those who heartily and in true faith embrace and practice its principles.

While the Seal holds up before the world the apostate Church pricing and weighing out her wheat and barley, it says in effect: this is not the Church of *Christ*, the true *gospel* Church, which has the wine and the oil in it. This was once that Church; but she is now fallen, corrupt and avaricious, holding the forms and ceremonies of worship, and the wheat and barley, doctrines of Christianity; but destitute of the oil and the wine, the life and power of godliness.

As before said, oil and wine, either separate or jointly, are constant emblems of the spirituality, the inward grace imparted by the religion of Christ; and in this it differs from all other systems of religion ever presented to the mind of man. It has a life and power in it never known to or claimed by any other system of religion.

Oil sometimes implies light, as in the parable of the virgins, and it also signifies joy—the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness or sorrow. Wine is expressive of that cheerful, life-giving hope the true Christian derives from the gospel, and jointly they represent a healing, restoring power, as in the parable of the good Samaritan: "he bound up his wounds, "pouring in *oil* and *wine*." From the use thus made of the terms, oil and wine, it is evident that they are employed in

the Seal to distinguish the true Church of Christ from the apostate Church predicted by St. Peter and St. Paul.

The text says: *And see thou hurt not the oil and the wine.* The word *see* was introduced by the translators to give that construction that they supposed the text required, but the word is not in the original as critics inform us, nor is it necessary, according to the view I take of the text.

See thou hurt not the oil and the wine, implies that the authority represented by that Seal, possessed the power to hurt or destroy these peculiar excellences of the gospel Church, but was restrained from doing so by a superior power. The text, without the word *see,* would imply that the true Church of Christ was in no danger of falling into this system of abomination and falsehood practised by the apostate Church;—*And thou hurt not* (or will not hurt) *the oil and the wine.* And this was literally true; for this very act of publicly selling indulgences gave new life and a fresh impetus to the reformation.

The word *hurt* has various significations in the Bible as it has in its use amongst men.

In the prophecy of Jeremiah it is employed precisely in the way in which I suppose it to be used in the Seal. God by the mouth of his prophet Jeremiah deplores the *hurt* of the daughter of his people, and that it had been slightly healed. The *hurt* here alluded to was an *apostacy* of the Jewish Church, into which she was led by the corrupting influence and example of the idolatrous nations around her.

But when the voice announced to him that sat upon the black horse, the symbol of the apostate Church of Rome, *And thou hurt not the oil and the wine,* it is the triumphant assurance that the genuine Christians, the people who hold and practice the doctrines of Christ and enjoy the power and spirituality of his religion will not be *hurt,* will not be seduced by this false and corrupt merchandising, this blasphemous assumption of human authority to pardon sin.

Who can forgive sins but God? was the question asked by

the Jews on an occasion when Christ told a man his sins were forgiven. *Thy money perish with thee*, was the indignant rebuke which Peter addressed to the avaricious Simon, *because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.* If the offer to purchase the gift of God was a crime so heinous, was not *selling* the gift of God as blasphemous?

Although the grosser characteristics of this Seal have been done away, by the force and influence of the Protestant religion, acting upon and enlightening the moral sense of mankind, still there is a lurking feeling of kindred avarice amongst the descendants of him that sat upon the black horse, which leads them to keep up the same principle of merchandising, as far as they can, with a decent regard to the better informed religious sense of men. But this remnant of that traffic is to be destroyed, and the lamentation which the loss of so lucrative a trade will raise, is fully described in the eighteenth chapter.

THE FOURTH SEAL.

7. *And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.*

8. *And I looked, and behold a pale horse; and his name that sat on him was Death, and hell followed with him; and power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with the sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.*

This Seal brings us down to that epoch in the history of the Church, and indeed of the world, in which the empire of darkness began to be invaded by the light of a brighter day.

Men, previous to this period, were enslaved by a veneration for the old despotic governments under which former generations had lived and died; and by a superstitious reverence for the authority and ceremonies of the Romish Church. They saw nothing but the present, and thought of nothing

but the past. But now they began to turn their eyes to the *future.* Light increased as the reformation spread, and as it reflected upon the future it opened up new and brighter views of civil rights and religious liberty. The Church had been for nearly a thousand years, at least from the establishment of her temporal dominion in the days of Pepin and Charlemagne, the one great absorbing power. The people knew of no other religion, they had heard of no other. Ignorance and superstition bowed a willing neck to the oppressive yoke of Popish despotism, and men never supposed that they were made for any thing else than to yield a ready submission to the commands of the Church.

The Bible had been an unknown book to the people. Before the art of printing was discovered, a manuscript copy of the Bible cost four or five hundred dollars. It was buried in the gloom and privacy of the cloister, and thus far at least, those monkish retreats had benefited the world. They held within their walls this sacred treasure when the ignorance of the dark ages trampled under foot the folios of ancient learning and the records of genius.

The Bible was not used however by the monks to enlighten the people. It lay amongst the dusty heaps of neglected rubbish with which their convents were lumbered.

But the art of printing had been lately discovered, which was destined to act as a powerful auxiliary to the reformation, and it brought out the Bible and gave its sacred treasures to the people.

Escaped from the cells of monkish ignorance, the Bible began to speak to the world through the preaching of the reformers, and by the power of its voice the old institutions of despotism, both of Church and State, felt a strange shaking; it was the handwriting upon the wall, and the Belshazzars of Rome trembled before it.

Rome saw with alarm the spreading influence of this spirit of free inquiry, and at once resolved that it should be suppressed.

The demon of pagan persecution, which once fed the wild beasts with Christian martyrs, and lighted the populous streets of Rome with their burning bodies, had been banished from the Empire by the decree of the Roman senate in the reign of Theodosius; but it was now recalled by *Christian* Rome, converted and baptized, and commissioned to go out under its new character, but with its old ferocious nature unchanged, to execute the vengeance of the Church upon the subjects of the reformation.

This Seal is a representation of the means employed by the Romish Church to defeat and put a stop to the rising power of a renovated and pure Christianity.

I differ entirely, as to the import of the Seal, with those who have preceded me in giving explanations of it.

It has been regarded by some as the representation of a dreadful pestilence, producing great mortality, and following very naturally the *black-horse famine*, as they explain the third Seal to mean. But this explanation has to contend with the embarrassing difficulty of determining *what plague or pestilence*, the Seal refers to. Plagues were of frequent occurrence in those ages of the world to which some writers suppose this Seal applies; and in fact pestilence was almost a necessary consequence of the frequent and protracted wars, then common in the world. The men were gathered to the field of battle, while the imperfect means of tillage were left to be employed by the women.

Whoever will look over the list of centuries commencing with the wars of the Romans and down to the times of civilization and improvement made by Christianity, will not fail to find the history of more or less plagues in all of them. So numerous have they been that different commentators have selected, according to their taste, different plagues to explain the pale-horse Seal. They tell us, in confirmation of their opinion, that in some towns where the pestilence raged with great violence, the wild beasts were drawn from the neighboring mountains in such numbers, by the odor of dead bodies,

that the living, who could escape, were obliged to flee from their homes to avoid being devoured by them.

This may all be true, and yet have no relation whatever to this Seal. Those writers seem to forget that the Seal is entirely a *figurative or emblematical* representation; and to make it literal in one part and figurative in another, is doing violence to the text. The killing by *wild beasts*, which they suppose refers to the fact just mentioned, is a mere figurative representation of *one* of the various modes of violence employed by this persecuting power.

The first peculiarity to be observed in the text, is the clear and unequivocal notice it gives of the period or era of time in which the scenes of terror it represents will transpire. They are said to be inflicted over *a fourth part of the earth!* No where else in the Apocalypse is a fourth part of the earth spoken of previous to this Seal; and the presumption is unavoidable that it is announced here with the express design of informing the Christian world, that the occurrence of this pale-horse Seal was to be coincident with the era in which the *discovery of America* should add a *fourth* geographical division to the earth. The Seal applies to Europe, a fourth part of the earth.

This explanation is important in another view. It not only defines the era of the pale-horse Seal, but it establishes the fact, that those Seals, as well as the other prophetic visions, follow in regular order the *onward current of time;* and are not to be regarded as the announcement of disconnected fragments of historical events, thrown out without regard to order or time, and which may be picked up and carried about through the lapse of centuries until some event or circumstance may be seized upon as congenial with them.

This has occurred in relation to this very Seal now under consideration. Although it stands last in the order of those events in which the Church is the principal actor, some very celebrated expounders of the Revelations have taken it away back to *heathen Rome*, and give us the bloody reign of some

half dozen of her cruel emperors as its illustration! Some writers have imagined that the whole book of Revelation has its beginning and end in the history of heathen Rome; whilst others discover little else in it than the towering form of Popery; and others again, find in the appalling scenes which accompanied the overthrow and ruin of Jerusalem, the true source of explanation of its symbolical pages.

For my own part, I believe that heathen Rome has nothing at all to do with the Book after it leaves the seven Churches; and that the Papal Church, although a very conspicuous actor in its scenes, is not fairly represented at all times; and that the overthrow of Jerusalem explains nothing at all that is announced in the Book.

Seemingly for the express purpose of guarding the mind of the Church against applying the announcements of the Apocalypse to eras not intended, the prophet says to this effect :—In that era of time when a *new world* has been discovered, and a *fourth part* is added to the grand geographical divisions of the earth, will this pale-horse seal disclose its fearful powers of destruction. We are to look, then, for the course of this seal from the twelfth through several succeeding centuries.

If we analyse the entire description, as it is given by the prophet, of the pale horse and his rider, with the train that followed his course, we shall be surprised that any one could have fallen into the error of supposing that such a representation was intended to convey the idea of a state of pestilence, emaciated disease, feeble, helpless sickness. Why! Jupiter with his angry thunderbolts, or Charlemagne with his great sword, could not exhibit a more fearful power than is implied in this pale-horse seal.

What is the pale horse, with his rider, and death and hell following with him? It is the concealed lightning that leaps suddenly from the angry cloud and marks its course with death! It is the invisible arm of hierarchal vengeance

striking down its doomed victim without letting him know where the blow comes from! In a word, it is—

THE INQUISITION!

The horse, in this seal, as in those that have preceded it, is symbolical of the people. His color is expressive of the terror which seizes the people who are under constant dread of the Inquisition. Its presence fills them with fear and trembling. No contrivance of religious bigotry, no institution for the suppression of free inquiry into Gospel truth, was ever before known that carried with it such *heart-sinking fear* and such *pale-faced terror!* We need not go to any authorities to prove that fear produces paleness of the face. Every one knows that a sudden impulse of fear changes the color of the ruddiest complexion; and however secret the feeling may be hid in his own breast, his pale face tells that the man is alarmed. It is the dread of the Inquisition, spreading a paleness over the people, that the peculiar color of this horse is intended to symbolise.

And his name that sat on him was *Death!* This name is symbolical, and is designed to express the desperate depravity, the hopeless moral corruption of the power represented by the rider of this horse. It has no reference to that work of destroying human life which it was to effect. This picture introduces a great moral struggle now commenced in the world; the renewal, rather, of the old Pagan violence and hatred against Christianity. The moral nature of the power thus arrayed against the truth and righteousness of God is *death,*—a dark, malignant power, possessed and impelled by the Devil, the enemy of God and righteousness. When men are saved from their sins by the grace of God, they are said to be brought from *death* unto *life*. He who sat upon the horse was the embodiment, the personification of Sin, of all that is opposed to God and destructive of the best interests of man. It was a power whose very nature

was utterly destitute of any principle of Christian life. Such was the Inquisition. A picture of its general history has been sketched in vivid colors by the Rev. Mr. Croly, an English divine, whose book was printed in this country in 1827. I shall avail myself of the portrait he has so ably drawn. It will be seen how appropriate the name is to the power that bears it, and how illy the symbol applies to a state of pestilence.

"In our fortunate country," says Mr. Croly, "the power "of the Romish Church has so long perished, that we find "some difficulty in conceiving the nature, and still more in "believing the tyranny of its dominion. The influence of "monks, and the murders of the Inquisition, have passed "into a nursery tale ; and we turn with a generous yet rash "and unjustifiable scepticism from the history of Romish au-"thority.

"Through almost the entire of Italy, through the Flemish "dominions of Germany, through a large portion of France, "and through the entire of Spain, a great monastic body "was established, which, professing a secondary and trivial "obedience to the sovereign, gave its first and real obedience "to the Pope. The name of spiritual homage cloaked the "high treason of an oath of allegiance to a foreign monarch ; "and, whoever might be King of France, or Spain, the *Pope* "was King of the Dominicans.

"All the other monastic orders were so many papal out-"posts. But the great Dominican order, immensely opulent "in its pretended poverty ; formidably powerful in its hypo-"critical disdain of earthly influence ; and remorselessly am-"bitious, turbulent and cruel in its primitive zeal ; was an "actual lodgment and province of the Papacy, an inferior "Rome in the chief European kingdoms.

"In the closest imitation of Rome, this spiritual power "had fiercely assumed the temporal sword ; the Inquisition "was army, revenues and throne in one. With the racks

" and fires of a tribunal worthy of the gulf of darkness and
" guilt from which it rose, the Dominicans bore Popery in
" triumph through Christendom, crushing every vestige of
" religion under the wheels of its colossal idol. The subju-
" gation of the Albigenses, in 1229, had scattered the
" Church ; the shock of the great military masses was past ;
" a subtler and active force was required to destroy the wan-
" dering people of God ; and the *Inquisition* multiplied it-
" self for the work of death. This terrible tribunal set every
" principle and even every form of justice at defiance. Se-
" crecy, that confounds innocence with guilt, was the spirit
" of its whole proceeding. All its steps were in darkness.
" The suspected revolter from Popery was seized in secret,
" tried in secret, never suffered to see the face of accuser,
" witness, advocate or friend, was kept unacquainted with
" the charge, was urged to criminate himself ; if tardy, was
" compelled to this self-murder by the rack ; if terrified, was
" only the more speedily murdered for the sport of the multi-
" tude.

" From the hour of his seizure he never saw the face of
" day, until he was brought out as a public show, a loyal and
" festal sacrifice, to do honor to the entrance of some travel-
" ing viceroy, some new married princess, or on more fortu-
" nate occasions, to the presence of the sovereign. The dun-
" geons were then drained, the human wreck of the torture
" and the scourge were gathered out of darkness, groups of
" misery and exhaustion, with wasted forms and broken
" limbs, and countenances subdued by pain and famine into
" idiotism, and despair, and madness, to feed the fires round
" which the Dominicans were chanting the glories of Popery,
" and exulting in the destruction of the body for the good of
" the soul. * * * * * *

" In 1517, Luther began to preach the Gospel. The ear-
" liest violences of the Inquisition had been directed to the
" Bible ; and the edict of the Council of Thoulouse, in 1229,
" had forbidden the laity to read it in their own tongue. The

" Bible, thus shut up in a dead language, had passed away " from the hands of men, or was retained only by refugees, at " the peril of their lives.

"Luther had at length found it, and flashed this living " torch of light and hope in the eyes of the Popedom. The " Inquisition was instantly up in arms. All the translated " Scriptures, all the commentaries suspected of the pollution " of a Protestant pen, were prohibited. But the rage was " not confined to Lutheran translations. The *Bible itself* was " the enemy, in whatever language. The Oriental professors " in the chief seat of Spanish theology, Salamanca, were com- " manded, on pain of excommunication, to give up their " Greek and Hebrew Bibles to the *Holy Office!* In the year " 1558, the terrible law of Philip II. was published, which " decreed confiscation and death for all who should sell, buy, " keep, or read any of the books prohibited by the Holy " Office! Even penitents at confession were compelled to " denounce the trangressors of the edict; and in this hideous " aggravation of tyranny, which turned a professed act of re- " ligion into an act of blood, and armed child and parent " against the life of each other, the *Pope* was a fellow con- " spirator with the *King* and the *Inquisition.* The law was " sanctioned by a bull issued in 1559.

" This was an era of activity. An additional document of " the utter darkness and slavery of conscience demanded by " Popery, was furnished in the ordinance of Valdez, the In- " quisitor-General, in the same year. His catalogue 'pro- " 'hibited all Hebrew books, and those in other tongues, " 'treating of the Jewish customs; all Arabic, or treating of " 'Mohammedanism; all works written or translated by a " 'heretic, or an individual condemned by the Holy Office; " 'all works in Spanish, with a preface, letter, glossary, com- " 'ment, &c., by a heretic; all unpublished MSS., sermons, " 'writings, treatises on Christianity, its sacraments, and its " 'Scriptures,' &c. 'Such is the age,' says Pere del Prado, " the successor of Valdez, 'that some men have carried their

" 'audacity to the execrable extremity of demanding permis-
" 'sion to *read the Scriptures* in the vulgar tongue, without
" 'fearing to encounter *mortal poison* therein.' "

This short extract from Croly's account of the Inquisition, is quite sufficient to show its general character, and its diabolical purpose.

Christianity is the spiritual *life* of the world, as Christ interprets it himself repeatedly, and in various modes of expression, in the Gospels ; and it follows that whatever defeats or destroys this gift of God, or the means he has appointed to bring this life to mankind, must be *death !* moral and spiritual death.

In these acts of the Inquisition, going to destroy all the means of religious instruction, all knowledge of Gospel truth, we see the full exemplification of the character of him who sat upon the horse, and whose name was *Death !*

The Inquisition, or Holy Office, prohibited the Bible to the people, and all books, in whatever language, and all writings, that could impart the knowledge of God, and bring the gift of God to man ; all were denounced, and the people were forbid to read, or to own them, upon pain of the rack, and fires of the Inquisition. This is the death personified by him who sat upon the pale horse.

And hell followed with him. *Death*, explains the nature of the power engaged in destroying the life of the world ; and *hell*, which followed with him, is expressive of the character of the means employed. The term represents the torture and agony which are the inflictions of the Inquisition. Hell is the profoundest depth the human mind can reach in its estimate of agony,—*And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment.* And because there was nothing in the experience of men, in all the various forms of distress and grief which ordinarily beset the path of life, nor in death itself, with the infinite variety of aspects in which it comes to man, that could give an adequate idea of the anguish produced by the inflictions of the *Holy Office*, the prophet draws his illustra-

tion of them from the infernal regions, and says—*And hell followed with him.* The bodily sufferings inflicted by the Inquisition, were as extreme as the demon of cruelty itself could invent ; but these were forgotten in the unspeakable anguish that often crushed the mind of its victims. Its gory hand seized with ferocious malice the most refined and delicate affections and sympathies of human nature, and sported with their agonies in transports of savage delight. Parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, were tortured into pretended accusers against each other, by unconscious expressions uttered in the delirium of pain, and were then compelled to be spectators of the agonies inflicted upon the dearest objects of their affections.

The second branch of the text says—*And power was given to them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.* Speaking in general terms of the symbol, the plural is now used for the first time. The prophet first spoke of *him* that sat upon the horse in the singular, referring to the Inquisition, as the grand operator in the scenes of cruelty, to show that he meant the principal executive agent ; he says—*And hell followed with him.* But the prophet now speaks in general terms of the powers that are jointly engaged in prosecuting this deadly hostility to religious light. We have seen that the King of Spain, Philip II., and the Pope, and the Dominican order, were the three powers actively engaged in it, probably at the very period of time referred to by the seal.

The office of Inquisition had existed for a long time previous under the Pontiffs of Rome, and executed by the Dominicans. Its early purpose was to hunt down and destroy the scattered Albigenses who had escaped the sword of persecution. But the formidable inroads made by the Reformation in Germany and Switzerland, aroused the King of Spain, and Philip II., in 1558, gratified his remorseless bigotry by a public decree, interdicting all means of religious instruction,

under penalty of death to all who should sell, buy, keep, or read, any of the books prohibited by the Holy Office ! And in the year following, 1559, the Pope issued his bull, sanctioning the decree of Philip. Here were the powers alluded to by the prophet, when he says—*And power was given unto them,* &c. ; that is, they concerted measures, and agreed amongst themselves, to make their hostility to the Reformation more efficient and terrible, by extending and enlarging the powers of the Inquisition, and at once to banish from Europe the light of Christianity, and the hopes of the Reformation. And for this purpose they employed all the various means of cruelty that could be devised by the most bigoted and diabolical ingenuity ; these are figuratively alluded to in the text. Whoever will be at the trouble of looking into the particular accounts of the fiendish proceedings of the Inquisition, will be fully convinced that there is no anguish which the sword can bring, nor phrenzied hunger produce, or that could arise from protracted death in solitary dungeons, or from being mangled and devoured by ferocious wild beasts, that could equal the mental torture endured by its unhappy victims. *And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth.* This part of the text expresses the well known historical fact, that about this period, and as well before as after, the Romish Church held an almost absolute dominion over the kings and princes of all Europe ; and no measure of violence, demanded by the bull of the Pope against a civil or religious adversary, would be seriously resisted by any monarch who valued his crown.

As the Inquisition is the last exhibition of the successive stages of the apostacy of the Church, so it is the most revolting, hateful and heart-sickening page in the record of human transactions.

The world stands aghast as it beholds the ancient Church, which, in her early centuries, bore herself with unflinching fidelity and magnanimity amidst the fires of Roman persecu-

tion, and by her patience, meekness and charity, challenging the admiration of even her enemies, and finally overthrowing the altars of heathen superstition, and converting its temples to the service of the true God, now leagued with the sword, and with hunger, and with wild beasts, yea, and with death and hell, in a ferocious war against the very faith for which she had once suffered the loss of all things, and to drive out of the world all that God had introduced into it to give life and peace to men!

While I freely admit that I have no predilections for the Roman Catholic religion, I wish it distinctly understood that I do not refer to the corruptions and cruelty of the Church of four or five centuries ago for the purpose of exciting animosity or unkind feelings against members of that Church of the present day and of this country.

However much the minds of enlightened Christians may be shocked in viewing the scenes of her past history, there are amongst her membership in our own country very many whose character for intelligence, patriotism and morality command our highest respect. But I design to show that she was the subject of a chain of prophetic annunciations extending through many centuries, and as history is the interpreter of prophecy, the truths reflected from her mirror are the only lights that we can depend upon to show the point of connection between the subject and the prophecy.

Nothing is so dangerous to a nation as a *false religion.* The history of the Jewish people affords a striking illustration of this truth. The prosperity and happiness of the people under their kings who feared God and reverenced his law, stand out with remarkable distinctness in contrast to the calamities which, in every form of disaster, confusion and defeat, harassed them when they corrupted their religion with idolatry. And to what is the present comparative state of peace and prosperity of Christendom owing but to the diffusion of a purer, more enlightened, and more scriptural religion than that which, for many centuries, oppressed

the energies and darkened the minds of the people? But this is a digression; let us return to the seals.

"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," is the teaching of the Book of Revelation. Does this mean that the testimony of Jesus is given in favor of his Church by prophetic announcements of her success and triumph over all obstacles, and that at the same time he marks, with the same prophetic warnings, the apostacy and final overthrow of the Church that had departed from her first standing in purity of doctrine and evangelical faith? That two such churches are the subjects of the prophecies of the Apocalypse, is undeniable; and we can identify them in no other way than by the instruction of history.

By the light of history we have seen the Church which was built up by the teachings of Christ and his Apostles, in the fourth century crowned the religion of the Roman Empire. We have seen her soon fall from the purity and faith which had elevated her to that eminence, and make her appearance in the red-horse seal; then, further on, she appears before the world in a deeper stage of her decline, in the black-horse seal; and deeper and more abandoned still to all that could corrupt and destroy virtue, she is seen in the pale-horse picture, under associations that imply the greatest possible distance from God. In the subsequent chapters of the Apocalypse, we shall see those two churches exhibited in their respective characters and in most decided contrast.

THE FIFTH SEAL.

9. *And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:*

10. *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*

11. *And white robes were given unto every one of them; and*

it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

In this seal we hear, for the first time in these prophecies, the voice of the *Church of Christ*, coming up from her state of oppression and suffering, as if just venturing cautiously out of her retreats, where she had been confined during the wide sweep of apostacy, which had left the original Church without the least impress of heaven upon her form.

This seal connects itself with the one that precedes it, and is, in fact, a continuation of the same subject, with only this difference,—both seals refer to the incipient stages of the Reformation — to the revival of true Christianity. The fourth seal exhibits the violent measures adopted by the apostate Church to suppress it ; while the fifth utters the prayer of the suffering Church to God, for the interposition of his judgments upon her oppressors, and his vindication of the cause of his suffering people.

A particular history of the Church is not to be expected in a work which simply aims, as has been already said, to exhibit the chain of prophecy, and point to those subjects which form its several links.

The world, since the days of the Apostles, has never been entirely without a people whose lives illustrated the Gospel doctrines. These were few, and scattered over different parts of Europe, during the days of the power and apostacy of the Romish Church. They were descended from her, but they came out of her that *they might not be partakers of her sins.*

For many centuries they were unknown and unseen by the world. They dwelt mostly amidst the secluded valleys of the Alps, and, when alarmed by the tumult of the worldly Church, clamoring for dominion and wealth amongst the kingdoms of the earth, they would retreat to their caves and hide themselves in the recesses of their mountains.

Thus they continued for several centuries to live in all the simplicity of primitive Christianity, retired from the pride and bustle of the world, as little known and as little observed as the streamlets that pursued their peaceful course through the deep shades of their verdant glens. But their growth was continuous, and their numbers increased, until, finally, they seemed to outgrow the limits of their long retreat, and they came out upon the surface of the world with the banner of their faith and doctrine borne up before all men. These were the Waldenses, whose genuine piety and evangelical faith were illustrated by a corresponding life.

Their preaching and piety produced a deep impression upon the people, and multitudes in France, Germany and Italy espoused their religion. Their numbers in the twelfth century amounted to near a million.

This cloud, no bigger than a man's hand at its appearance, was now spreading and extending itself over the heavens. Its threatening aspect aroused the jealousy of Rome, and the Pope took prompt measures to arrest its progress. The King of France and his nobles were commanded by Pope Innocent III. to extinguish the first light of reformation. "An army of half a million of men marched under the Pa-"pal banners, led by the Abbot of the Cistercians. This "overwhelming power of persecution swept everything be-"fore it. Its brutal rage was not restrained by age or sex. "The City of Beziers fell under its fury, and its twenty-three "thousand inhabitants were put to the sword.

The Count of Thoulouse was at length forced into the field to the support of his subjects, who were Waldenses chiefly. Simon de Montford, a man of blood, had entered his territory with fire and sword. The whole south suddenly rose against him, and the war became fierce, general, and doubtful. But the whole power of France, headed by Louis VIII., at length was thrown against Thoulouse; and in 1229, hostilities ended by a treaty which merged the territory of the Count of Thoulouse in the Royal dominion;

the war cost a million of lives.* This was the part which the military performed in crushing the Waldenses.

These Christians were driven from their homes and scattered in every direction, to avoid the violence of their pursuers. An army was no longer the suitable instrument of their destruction. The Inquisition now became the agent of their further persecution.

I have been thus particular in relating the circumstances of the destruction of the Waldensian Church, that it may be seen when we come to the overthrow of the Huguenots, at a later period, that the exterminations of the two Churches were very much alike.

From this prostrated and persecuted Church the prophet heard the cry go up : *How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell upon the earth !*

This seal represents these souls as being *under the altar !* But this, like the other seals, will not admit of a literal interpretation. The actual loss of life, or the martyrdom of the body cannot be intended. The idea that these were departed spirits, who had left this world, and had gone into the future state, is wholly inadmissible. The very language employed in the cry they are represented as raising to God, forbids the idea. It would be a reproach to the state of blessedness, the future abode of the righteous, to suppose they could be the subjects of such dissatisfaction and grief as are expressed by those souls under the altar. Impatience with their condition, and a desire for the divine vengeance upon their persecutors are expressed in their cry. With the living such feelings are very natural, and are constantly uttered in words just such as those used by these souls under the altar. The most humble and pious of the earth often give utterance to their astonishment at the mysterious providence of God, that permits the wicked to triumph and inflict

* Croly.

the most shocking cruelties upon those whose lives and virtues are a light and a blessing to the world! What is more common than to hear the good and the upright exclaim: "Why is it that God permits such acts of violence and "crime? Why does not the vengeance of Heaven fall upon "and consume the perpetrators of such ungodliness?" But in all these matters God is judge, and he determines the time and the manner of dealing in the way of judgment with his enemies. The day, the appointed day, and the inferior instrumentalities which were to co-operate in re-establishing Christianity in the earth, had not come yet, and these souls under the altar were told that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow-servants and their brethren that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

These souls were seen by the prophet *under the altar!* The altar is the symbol of the whole active service of the Church; and standing before the altar, as the Jewish priests did, is the figure of a regular and established Church service, statedly performed.

The Psalmist expresses this idea in the language of his poetic aspirations: *I will wash my hands in innocency; so will I compass thine altar, O Lord: That I may publish with the voice of thanksgiving, and tell of all thy wondrous works.—Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy.** Exultation and praise is connected with the service of the altar where people have the rights and privileges of altar worship.

But their souls being seen under the altar signifies that their whole system of divine worship was *prostrated, overthrown.* This was literally true as regards the Waldensian Church. Their churches were demolished, they were prohibited from preaching, all religious rights were denied them,—in a word they were slain, were killed.

The white robes given to them betoken the purity of their

* Psalms xxvi and xliii.

faith, and that they were the true servants of God. In every case where the white robe is seen, it is to be regarded as the livery of the righteous, and whatever their enemies may say against them, the white robe is the pledge of God's approbation.

These insignia of the divine favor had reference to the *doctrines* of that Church as well as to the *faith* and *practice* of the Waldenses. The spirit of inspiration foresaw that their enemies would attempt to justify their violence against them upon the false pretence that they held unscriptural and dangerous doctrines! They were libellously charged with holding the doctrine of Manichæism! and that under its teachings they were guilty of dangerous excesses. But this was alleged by their enemies, the Romanists, to justify themselves in treading out, by means the most barbarous, this first kindling fire of a renovated Christianity. They were covered from this false imputation, by the white robe thrown around every one of them.

We have now seen the end of the first organized Christian Church that appeared in Europe in opposition to the Church of Rome.

Here and there the feeble glimmerings of gospel light were seen scattered among the dwellers in the valleys and the mountains of Piedmont, as far back as the ninth and tenth centuries. But as a distinct organised Church, having an appointed ministry, established means of grace, and religious worship, they were not known until the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Their numbers, as has already been stated, were quite considerable, and rapidly increased under the zealous preaching of their ministers. They became an object of Popish jealousy, and were assailed and subdued in the manner already stated. The souls under the altar represent this Church in its oppressed and overthrown condition, and as crying to God for the interposition of his power against the enemies of the Christian religion.

The answer to this call implies that the time for the tri-

umph of the gospel had not yet come,—that the means which God, by his providence, would bring about for the permanent establishment of Christianity, were not yet matured, and that a little season would yet have to transpire before the world would be prepared for the great reaction which should restore the religion of Jesus Christ. And it is further said that during this little season, other and similar instances of violence would be experienced by their fellow servants and brethren who would be still struggling in the same holy cause, and opposing the ignorance and corruption of the popular and powerful Church of Rome.

The persecution and overthrow which the infant Church was doomed to experience during the little season, belong to the events of the next Seal, where we shall see a very striking analogy in the treatment of the Protestant Church of France, with that which the Waldenses had received from the same power more than three centuries before.

Although the Waldenses, as a Church, had been subdued and scattered, and severely treated by their implacable enemies, they continued to adhere to the faith and maintain the doctrines of the gospel. Like the seed which the wind scatters abroad, they took root to a greater or less extent wherever they went. In different countries their doctrines and practice commended them to the people, and in France too, where they had felt the severest blows of Popish violence, their numbers increased astonishingly. The crusades, and other wars, for a long time employed the arms and occupied the attention of France, after the overthrow of this first effort at reformation. These circumstances were highly favorable to the recovery and growth of her Protestant subjects. The events alluded to which were to fulfil the little season of continued depression of the gospel Church, make a part of the disclosures of the sixth Seal, as I have already stated. But as they are connected with the principal subjects of the fifth Seal, by the distinct reference made to them under that Seal, it will present a more condensed view of the

whole subject to anticipate that portion of the sixth Seal, and place it in connection with this. Nothing could have suited the warlike genius of France better than the wild and fanatical crusades undertaken for the conquest of Jerusalem. No kingdom plunged into this gulf of suicidal enterprise with greater avidity than she did, and none suffered more from its perils.

These crusades, however, served two useful purposes. In the first place, they disposed of the surplus population of Europe; and while they lost to the world a vast number of its bravest and best men, they swallowed up innumerable multitudes whose existence was merely employed as fuel to keep up the flames of war. And in the second place these crusades drew off to some extent the fierce animosities of Popery from the young and tender growth of Protestantism, and gave it time to acquire firmness and strength.

But when the foreign objects, upon which the excitement of France had been thrown were all subdued or abandoned, then it returned upon herself again. The fire of her war-temper must burn; and if fuel does not call it to foreign countries, it will find it at home, and will fiercely consume her own people.

The civil wars of France now broke out, and the Protestants, or Huguenots, were involved in them. The details of these sanguinary wars must be looked for in the history of that country. Their results only will be referred to as sufficient to show the meaning of the Seal.

In the earlier portion of the sixteenth century, the conflicts between the government and the Huguenots were frequent and severe. The armies of the latter were less in numbers, but the courage and ardor with which they struggled for their religion, and the skill and bravery of their leaders, compelled their Catholic adversaries to propose terms. The Huguenots were secured in their rights both political and religious, and several important towns were given to them as a guarantee of both. But on the accession of Henry

IV. to the throne of France, a more more formal provision was made for their security and enjoyment of their rights, by the edict of Nantes, promulgated in 1589. But no measures which looked to the protection of Protestantism could long remain the policy of a nation where Popery was so often the guiding power.

Protestantism was a heresy! and true to her principles of those days which declare that no faith is to be kept with a heretic, the Romish Church, in utter disregard of the edict of Nantes, incessantly plied her means, and stimulated her emissaries to destroy the Huguenots. In the moment of their greatest confidence, when their quiet and safety seemed beyond the reach of any foes, when the fostering hand and the paternal power of the throne, as they fondly dreamed, was calmly resting upon them and assuring them of safety, when an unusual degree of courtesy and royal favor was shown to their leaders, by invitations to Paris to witness the ceremonies and enjoy the festivities of a princely marriage,—in that very hour, when every thing was made to wear the appearance of royal favor and protection, the horrid mine was secretly and treacherously spread throughout France, and at a given signal, the torch was applied, and sixty thousand Huguenots, of all classes and ranks and ages, were involved in the indiscriminate massacre of the St. Bartholomew!

But the explanation of the second branch of the Seal is not found in the civil wars by which the Huguenots were forced to take up arms in their own defence, nor in the incessant plots, and perfidious stratagems of their enemies to overthrow them, nor yet in this crowning act of fiendish murder just referred to.

This explanation will be found only in the consequences that followed the revocation of the edict of Nantes.

I shall again avail myself of Mr. Croly, and give his lucid exposition of that important event.

"The Church in France," says Mr. Croly, "had increased "rapidly under the reigns of Henry IV., and Louis XIII.

"At the beginning of the reign of Louis XIV., it amounted "to two millions and a half, incomparably the most industrious, intelligent, and orderly portion of the people. Its "clergy were distinguished for piety and learning. It had "*six hundred and twenty-six places of worship, and six hundred* "*and forty-seven ministers.* The Huguenots were eminently "loyal during the period from the edict of Nantes, in 1589, "to the beginning of the persecutions, under Louis XIV. "They have even the testimony of Louis to their unimpeachable allegiance. In a letter to Cromwell, who had desired "that the Duke of Savoy, in his cruelties to the Vaudois, "should not be suffered to expect encouragement from "France, the king stated 'that it was not likely that he "'would co-operate in inflicting any punishment on the sub-"'jects of the Duke of Savoy, on account of their attach-"'ment to the pretended reformed religion, seeing he con-"'ferred so many tokens of favor on his *own subjects of the* "'*same religious* profession. For he had reason to *applaud* "'their fidelity and zeal in his service. They omitted no "'opportunity of giving him evidence of their loyalty, *even* "'*beyond all that could be imagined,* contributing in all things "'to the advantage of his affairs.'

"Within five years from this testimony to the pacific and "obedient conduct of its Protestant subjects," continues Mr. Croly, "the government commenced a course of the most "galling irritation. Every year some new drop of bitterness "was instilled into the wound of the last, until the whole calamity was completed by the revocation of the edict of "Nantes.

"On the 22d of October, 1685, the decree of revocation "announced—

"1. A repeal of the whole edict of 1588, and of every concession in favor of the reformed; with a declaration that "*their churches should be demolished!*

"2. A prohibition of *meeting for worship in any place, or* "*under any pretence!*

"3. An express interdict of every kind of religious exer-
"cise in the houses of those among the reformed of high
"rank or noble birth, under pain of *confiscation* and *death!*

"4. The banishment of all their ministers from the king-
"dom within fifteen days, unless they became Roman Ca-
"tholics!

"5. An offer of a third more than their stipend to those
"ministers who would conform, with a continuation of it to
"their widows.

"6. An offer of admission to the profession of the law
"three years sooner than the regular time.

"7. The absolute shutting up of all their schools.

"8. The baptism of their children by the Popish priests,
"under a penalty of 500 livres.

"9. Permission by the king's clemency for the refugees, if
"returned within four months, and converted to Popery,
"to recover their property and privileges.

"10. A prohibition of leaving the kingdom under the pen-
"alty of the galleys or death.

"11. The decrees against the relapsed were to be put in
"execution; but those who were not decided or prepared to
"declare themselves, might remain where they resided until
"it pleased God to enlighten them, continue their trade or
"arts, and enjoy their property without being disturbed, *pro-*
"*vided they refrained from all exercises of their religion*, and
"from every kind of meeting on that account."

These Protestants were now *killed* in the true sense of that term, as used in this prophecy. Their life as a *Church* was destroyed, and the resemblance between the killing in their case, and that of the Waldenses, their earlier brethren and fellow-servants, is striking.

By the same power, that is France, instigated by the same religious tyranny, that is Popery, were both these Churches overthrown and destroyed. This fulfils the prophecy of the fifth seal. Again, I remark, that in neither case does the seal refer to the destruction of natural life. It is probable

that in this respect the Huguenots killed as many of the Catholics as the Catholics killed of them. The military genius of the leaders of the Huguenots, was quite equal to those of the Catholic side. Indeed the odds was often in favor of the Huguenots, and the slain of their enemies was much greater in many of their hard fought battles, than their own. But in the case of the massacre of St. Bartholomew the slaughter was all on one side ; treachery, deep infernal treachery, accomplished that detestable and fiendish plot. Everything that gives dignity to royalty, or sacredness to truth, or security to society, was abandoned and trampled upon by the false, deceitful, perjured villainy, that instigated and accomplished that tragedy of blood and crime.

The Waldenses were no less brave and resolute in defending themselves in the memorable struggle made for their religious liberties ; but they were ultimately overpowered by the same tyranny and means, which, three hundred years after, overthrew their fellow-servants and their brethren, the Huguenots. As *religious bodies*, both were slain ; as distinct organised living *Churches*, both were *killed.*

When we consider the terrible calamities that constantly assailed Protestantism, and the powerful states that were arrayed against her, ever ready to execute the vengeance of Popery upon her, we are astonished that she should have made her way to the eminence and prosperity which now distinguish her position in the world ; and the inquiry occurs, Where did Protestantism find a place to rest its foot upon ?

This wonderful continuance and growth of a people so circumstanced, is the no less wonderful fulfilment of that saying of Christ to his Church in her earliest times : *Lo ! I am with you alway even unto the end.* The same power that sustained them under pagan persecution, upheld them also in the equally cruel treatment of their Christian adversaries.

Through the 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th centuries, Protestantism, under various appellations, according to the different

countries in which she was found, was in an arduous struggle for her life.

In England she was brought to the stake and burnt outright, in the Wickliffites and the Lollards. In Italy, she was given to the hoofs of beastly bigotry, as not worthy of a death dignified by the sword or the stake, but as a suitable punishment for her presumptuous audacity in coming into the country which lay under the sacred sceptre of the Pontiff! Even the paltry Duchy of Savoy called her half-famished peasantry from the daily drudgery of earning their scanty supply of food, to engage in the more important employment of hunting and destroying the early reformers. But France, always ready for an enterprise of blood, having no particular religion of her own, rushed upon any prey that offered itself. Her enthusiastic temperament and warlike spirit required constant employment, and whichever way her inclinations were directed, there her sword went with terrible effect.

France was not always the bond slave of Popery, as many of the European kingdoms were. The sovereignty and independence of her throne were not within the reach of any other power, not even that of St. Peter. Her religious inclinations, it is true, were in favor of Popery. This was natural, for she saw in that Church a spirit like her own, and outwardly, a display of pomp and magnificence well suited to her national tastes: she reciprocated royal favors and courtesies with the Vatican, and assumed, whenever occasion called for it, the air of religion, and the solemnity of devotion.

France slaughtered and exterminated the Waldenses in the thirteenth century, under Louis VIII., to oblige the Pope. She afterwards granted extensive political rights to the Protestants, and secured to them the fullest enjoyment of religious liberty by the edict of Nantes. These they continued to enjoy for the space of a hundred years. In this time the Huguenots, or Protestants, had increased to such an extent that it was thought prudent at Rome to check and reduce

them. France was ready for the work, and in the reign of Louis XIV. she suddenly revoked the edict of Nantes, threw down the barriers which she had raised around these excellent subjects, and let in the sword and the vengeance of their old adversary, Popery, upon them ; the result of this act of blind infatuation has been already stated.

This capricious policy practiced by France upon her Protestant subjects, was the result of her utter contempt of all religion. She was no less severe in her treatment of the subjects of the Pope, and indeed of the Pope himself, when she turned her restless arms upon Italy, than she had been toward her own Protestant subjects. But as to the mere matter of religion France would strike the tiara from the Pope's head, or kick over the chair of his Grace of Canterbury, with the same contemptuous disdain as she threw the Pope's bull into the fire ; or would fling the Augsburgh confession to the same flame if it were offered to her as a binding system of religious faith.

If Protestantism had been left out upon the field of unequal contest with these vindictive and capricious powers, she never would, in all probability, have reached her present happy condition. But such loose and hazardous uncertainties are not consistent with the overruling purposes of a wise Providence. God had arranged a very different plan for the success of his cause. He had selected the German Empire as the arena where Christianity should stand up in the presence of her enemies, and vindicate her faith and her doctrines by the Word of God.

This Empire, it is well known, comprised a number of states, or sovereignties, each having its own separate head, but all acknowledging one supreme head as emperor, elected by themselves. A system of political checks and balances bound and supported this confederacy, which made it at once a broad theatre, and a safe ground upon which to erect the Protestant Temple, as we shall presently see.

In the midst of these states, the light of the Reformation,

as from a great focus, blazed out, and all Europe saw it. The old fashioned means of fire and sword could not avail its enemies here. The borders of this Empire were a barrier against all that sort of violence and cruelty. The vengeance of its enemies had pursued and overwhelmed Protestantism without hindrance or restraint in the different kingdoms of Europe, but on the borders of this Empire it was met by the stern decree :—"Thus far and no farther! here let thy "proud waves be stayed!" Luther threw open the door of the Reformation wide and free in 1517. Frederick, the elector of Saxony, became his friend, and with other electors of the Empire resolved to protect Luther from violence.

The emperor, at this memorable epoch in the history of the Empire, was Charles V., a man of great military renown, and justly esteemed for his inflexible adherence to truth and justice. Charles was a decided Catholic, and employed all means which to him appeared honorable, to sustain that cause, but he never could be induced to tarnish his crown by any act of treachery or falsehood, although he was frequently urged to it. He could not be prevailed upon to violate the "*safe conduct*" under which Luther was commanded to meet and face his enemies in the Diet of Worms.

Charles was honestly anxious to compose the agitations of the States, and give rest to his Empire, and was so much displeased at times by what he considered the obstinacy of Luther and his party, that he would have employed force to compel their submission to the Pope, if he had not been admonished by the noble Saxon Elector that such a step might hazard the stability of Imperial authority.

It became fully known to the powers of Rome that the summary and violent measures employed against the earlier Reformers would not be tolerated in the Empire, and that if the Reformers there were put down, it must be by the force of truth and argument. This was what the Protestants were most anxious for, and what their enemies most dreaded—*investigation*, and *the word of God!* Thus was produced the

imposing spectacle of the Diet of Worms, and other similar assemblages which followed it, comprising the power and grandeur of the Empire. The emperor, with the princes of the different states, the legates and dignitaries of Rome, the learned doctors and professors of theology of Germany, with the dukes, lords, and nobles of the different kingdoms of Europe, either as ambassadors or spectators, altogether formed an assemblage at once solemn and august.

Who does not behold, in this display of human majesty and power, a striking exemplification of the poetic strains of the 2d Psalm? Where was there ever before an assemblage of earthly potentates, which, in its spirit, purpose, and its measures, so exactly met the prophetic delineations, and so fully reflected the vivid colorings of this ancient and sublime prophecy? In giving utterance to his inspiration, the bard of Israel employs almost the identical language used against the Reformation, *The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us*, &c. In this assemblage of power and majesty, Protestant Christianity was called upon to vindicate her principles. She was here to make out and defend her descent from Christ and his Apostles. It was now said to her, as it was said to Paul under similar circumstances, before the royal court of Agrippa, *Thou art permitted to speak for thyself.*

Here was the great conflict of mind. The acute reasoner and the bold declaimer in Romish theology was arrayed against the clear, forcible and convincing reasoning of the Reformers. This struggle of intellect struck out sparks which kindled as they flew, producing a light in the moral atmosphere of Europe which none had ever seen before. And the art of printing, having now attained the power of making itself felt in the world, took up the seed of the controversy, and went out like the sower, and sowed it broad-

cast over the land which had, for ages, lain a barren waste, under the interdict of Romish ignorance.

Almost everywhere the seed germinated, and took root, and grew with such energy, that it soon rose beyond the power of its enemies to check it.

Although the Reformation had successfully vindicated itself before the assembled powers of the German Confederacy and before the unbigoted and enlightened mind of Europe, it had not conciliated its grand adversary, the Popish Church. The inexorable demands of Popery for the destruction of the Reformation were still urged, and the kingdoms that could be moved by Rome to shed Protestant blood, were actively employed in checking its progress.

Amongst these kingdoms, France was conspicuous. She was not a member of the German Confederacy. She pursued an erratic course of her own, disdaining any and all laws by which other states were held and governed in their harmonious action. Her course has already been the subject of remark.

Spain, too, would have equalled France in rioting in Protestant blood, if her kingdom had furnished her with the subjects. But her inflexible bigotry, like the Upas tree, spread its baneful influence over her whole dominions, and, by its subtle poison, killed every germ of Protestantism as soon as it appeared.

Spain had established, in its fullest and fiercest form, the Court of Inquisition, and by this argus-eyed system of religious quarantine, she kept the country free from what she considered to be the dangerous contagion of Protestantism. Even her learned and distinguished ambassadors who had been sent to Germany to represent her in the grand councils of the Empire, were seized on their return, by this Court, and subjected to the searching operations of its suspicious and jealous powers, to detect any secret impressions, if any such had been made on their minds, by hearing the arguments and sermons of the reformers.

For want of subjects at home to gratify the insatiable appetite of Philip II. for Protestant blood, he made immense preparations to seek them abroad. With this intent, the "*Invincible Armada*" was prepared, by the labor of several years, and with more than the treasure of the nation. One hundred and thirty ships, bearing the fearful thunder of Spain, then the terror of the sea, and thirty thousand soldiers, as much dreaded in the field of battle, were destined for the conquest of Protestant England! And that heaven and earth, and sea, might be made subservient to the enterprise, the Pope's authority was present in the person of "monks, and Papal bulls, and instruments of torture." These were to effect the *spiritual* conquest of England, and purge out her Protestantism, after she should surrender her sovereignty to the Invincible Armada!

How little is man's greatness when he attempts to measure his strength against the Almighty! The proud hosts of Egypt, pursuing after the liberated people of God, presumptuously rushed into the way which had been miraculously opened for the escape of the Israelites, through the waters of the sea. But they there learned the woful lesson which seems to have been lost upon succeeding nations.

While in the midst of the sea, God looked upon them from the pillar of fire and the cloud, and their chariot-wheels fell off, and they were left a helpless prey to the devouring sea, when it rolled itself again into the chasm, overwhelming the daring hosts of Pharaoh in irretrievable ruin.

With the same glance of indignant omnipotence, did God look upon this Spanish Armada, as it went forth against the Protestant nation whom he had delivered from the bondage of Popery, and from that moment it was doomed to perish! He commanded the tempest against them, and their mighty squadrons were broken and driven, ships dashing against ships in wild dismay. The people they went out to conquer, followed up the terrible work of the tempest, and burnt, captured, or sunk nearly all that it did not destroy. Thus ended

the "Invincible Armada," which Spain had prepared to destroy the nation, which was the heart and the instrumental defence of Protestantism. Spain commenced her downward course from that disastrous blow given to her maritime greatness; and though she has deeply fallen, there is a greater deep yet reserved for her ruin. The cup of cruel suffering which she for centuries pressed to the lip of Protestantism, she has been made to drink of herself, and she must continue to drink of it until she has exhausted it to the dregs.

The Psalmist alludes to the effects produced by the divine judgments upon individuals and upon nations, in the impressive and beautiful strains of the 39th Psalm: *When thou with rebukes dost correct man for iniquity, thou makest his beauty to consume away like a moth.*

There are rebukes frequently given by the Almighty, that are parental, and are designed as correctives of some error which will lead to greater evil if not forsaken. These are salutary chastisements, sent to reclaim men from practices dangerous to their happiness. But such are not the rebukes the Psalmist refers to. He means the retributive judgments of heaven, that fall upon a nation which had become, by a long course of crime, hardened in iniquity, taking pleasure in unrighteousness. When these rebukes come upon a nation, *Ichabod!* may be written upon its throne; for it is a nation doomed to inevitable overthrow. These judgments are not often marked by sudden devastation and ruin, but are more frequently, in their operations, like the moth referred to by the Psalmist, which quietly eats its way through the numerous folds of the garment, fretting away its compactly woven texture, until it falls to pieces, and is utterly worthless. So do these rebukes from the long insulted majesty of heaven, gradually wear away the props, and exhaust the resources of a nation's prosperity, until poverty and want come upon them, like a strong man armed.

The sudden and surprising destruction of her proud and powerful Armada, was probably the first of a series of re-

bukes which were intended to break and subdue the national power of Spain, employed only for purposes of cruel persecution against Protestantism. The loss of her dominion over the sea soon followed the fall of her Armada, and she became too feeble to give a safe escort to the ships that bore her vast treasures from the mines of Mexico and Peru. These fell an easy prey to other nations, and went to enrich her enemies. Her immense possessions in South America were snatched from her palsied hand by rebellion, which she no longer had the power to subdue. Her own fertile and beautiful land has become almost a desert! Her people sunk in drowsy lethargy, devoid of energy, and ground to the earth by poverty and oppression. Her government has scarcely any other existence than that which it derives from the excitement and conflict of desperate factions, struggling for the mere skeleton of monarchy, the tottering remains of her former greatness. What has produced this sad change in the condition of a people who once stood pre-eminent amongst the nations of Europe? *A false religion!* with its legitimate offspring, bloody and fanatical persecution! These have thrown her in opposition to God and his righteous government; and by his rebukes her beauty is consumed away like a moth.

The condition of Spain will serve to illustrate the effect of the same rebukes upon other nations; for wherever similar causes exist amongst other people, like effects must follow.

The ignorance, poverty, and degradation, which characterise some of the nations of Europe and America, at this time,—while others, again, in close proximity, with no greater advantages either in climate or soil, are increasing in wealth, prosperity, and happiness,—present a problem well deserving the attention of the Christian and politician. And if the investigation into the cause of these very opposite conditions of people should lead to a comparison of their different religions, as to their moral influence, and their effect upon men's habits, it is the duty of each religious system—a duty alike owed to God and man—to enter heartily, and in good faith,

into the investigation; and wherever the plague-spot is found,—wherever the hindrance to human prosperity and happiness exists, let it be condemned, abandoned, and cast out, as a foul imposture—an enemy to God and man.

We now return to the further developments of the seals.

The answer given to the cry which ascended from the souls seen under the altar, was, *That they should rest yet for a little season.* They were patiently to wait and submit to their state of depression, until their fellow-servants and their brethren should be killed *as they were.* The revocation of the edict of Nantes, and the consequent overthrow of the Protestant Church of that nation, accomplished all that was to be done in that little season. There was no act of national violence, or cruel persecution against the Protestant Church, after those inflicted by France, of a similar character with these. The period had run out when men in these matters could do as they pleased with impunity. The answer to the souls under the altar, also implied that when that little season was fulfilled, then the divine vengeance would fall upon their enemies. We may now look for this promised retribution of God's righteous judgment upon the enemies of his religion, and of his people.

In the next seal we shall behold such scenes as might be looked for, when God arises to shake the nations in his wrath.

THE SIXTH SEAL.

12. *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;*

13. *And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind:*

14. *And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled to-*

gether; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

15. *And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bond man, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains;*

16. *And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;*

17. *For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?*

The opening of this seal spreads out before the eye of the prophet, events which are metaphorically expressed by great changes in the heavenly bodies, and by fearful convulsions of the earth,—events in which the interests of Christianity are involved, no less than the stability and perpetuity of earthly kingdoms.

This seal refers to that period of European history, beginning with those revolutions that have produced such wonderful changes in its political and ecclesiastical history, and may still embrace a more extended portion of the nineteenth century.

The prophet is remarkably brief in his allusion to those scenes, for the reason, perhaps, that they will be more particularly noticed under the trumpet of the same period. He just sketches the outline feature of the great drama, as if he had said, 'In that period of the world's history, the earth 'will be rent by great earthquakes; the luminaries of the 'heavens will be lost to the world, the stars that hold their 'silent stations in the sky will fall to the earth, and the 'heavens themselves, the vast field of all those resplendent 'orbs, will be rolled up like a parchment scroll. While on 'the earth, the mountains and the islands, uprooted from their 'foundations, will roll and toss, like ships no longer manage-'able in the midst of a storm-distracted ocean. The effects

'of this wild and stupendous scene of anarchy are visible in 'the terror which is represented as seizing men of every rank 'and condition of life, causing them to fly for shelter to dens 'and rocks of the mountains; calling upon the mountains to 'fall on them, and hide them from the wrath of God and the 'Lamb, and confessing that these are judgments from a long 'insulted God, whose vengeance has now fallen upon his ene-'mies, saying—*The great day of his wrath hath come, and who 'shall be able to stand?*'

These, of course, are all metaphorical representations, but they point to certain realities in this particular age of the world which history must unfold to us. The first four events named in the opening of the seal, followed the German Reformation, and were, indeed, consequences resulting from that great change in the religion of men. First, the great earthquake. Under the seals, the subjects that are metaphorically employed by the prophet, must be understood in conformity with the import of the seals themselves, that is, they are to be regarded as referring to the interests of the Church.

This earthquake is to be explained by great changes in the religious state of Europe. Very soon after the treaty of Passau, in 1552, which ended the long struggle of Protestantism in the German empire, by granting it *equal rights and liberty* with Popery, both in civil and religious matters, it was found that half of Germany, and about the same portion of Switzerland, with several other kingdoms, and England amongst them, had renounced the Church of Rome, and wholly abandoned Popery. This was the first great shaking of that Church, and foretold its coming doom. It might with great propriety be called a religious earthquake,—it shook the foundations of Popery, and overthrew many of her strongest supports.

The next event is represented under the metaphor of the *Sun*, becoming black as sackcloth of hair. This is the first direct reference to *England* that we have yet met with in the Apocalypse; but we shall meet with others hereafter of

a highly interesting character. Under the Seal it signifies a kingdom full of light, religious light, dispensing this light to surrounding nations as the sun dispenses his light around the earth. This kingdom is pre-eminent for her ecclesiastical dignity and purity; her Church founded upon the doctrines of the Bible and embracing the principles of the reformation, and reflecting them from her pious and learned hierarchy, as the light is reflected from the sun. It also signifies a power that cherishes and protects while it enlightens. This is Protestant England; the great luminary of Europe and the bulwark of the reformation; distinguished for learning, and for her civil and political institutions, above all other nations. This was her condition during the long and prosperous reign of Elizabeth, which commenced 1559, just seven years after the memorable treaty of Paysau, or the peace of religion.

In the short reign of Edward VI., some important steps were taken toward the establishment of Protestantism upon a sure and lasting foundation. But it is manifest that the reformed religion in England was not at that time in a state of sufficient ripeness for that great work. It had about it too much of the old leaven of fierce bigotry and persecution which had distinguished the religion of the Romish Church for several centuries before. The stake and the fire were too familiar with them, as the means of putting down opposition to the dominant religion, to admit of their being the builders of the Church which God designed to raise up in England.

The venerable Archbishop Cranmer, in the days of Edward, gave a melancholy proof of this fact, in ordering some who opposed his views of religion to be burnt at the stake. What would have been the character of the reformed Church in England if such principles of cruelty had been recognised by her in her early establishment? It is much more likely that such principles would have increased and become the common mode of treating dissenters, than that they would have subsided and given place to a more charitable and humane practice! Power, especially when armed with such

terrors, does not generally die for the want of being employed; the danger most to be apprehended, is from its increase. The English reformers of the days of Edward were not prepared to build the great temple of Protestantism; they were too vindictive in their feelings, too implacable in their temper; they suited the age in which they lived; they were better prepared to grapple with the powers of Popery and to fling back in its face the fires it kindled to consume them. But this war was to come to an end. The struggle between Protestantism and Popery was to cease in England. The religion that lived by fire and sword was to be banished, driven off; and the religion of Christ, breathing peace and goodwill to men, was to raise her temple in that land. But the men who had been in the struggle and bloodshed of the war with Popery, it appears were not to build this temple; however zealous they may have been for the truth. The builders of the great temple of Protestantism in England were to be men of peace; men whose hearts were not hardened nor their spirits embittered by scenes of blood and fire connected with religion! Is there not some analogy between this case and the building of the great temple in Jerusalem? How anxious David was to build the House of God! How his ardent desires broke out in the strains of his own inimitable poetry when he contemplated the magnificence of that temple which he, above all things, desired to build. David was as pious as Solomon, more zealous than any of his day for the glory of God, more honored than any of the kings, by the extraodinary favors of heaven, yet David was not permitted to build the temple; for the reason, that he was *a man of war*, a man of blood. This honor was reserved for the reign of Solomon, a reign of tranquillity and peace. Not that David was less approved and esteemed of God than Solomon was; but it was the harmony that existed between the purpose and will of God toward man, and the characteristic of Solomon's reign,—peace and good will toward

man, that conferred upon him the honor of building the temple.

The English reformers had their religious feelings improved, and their tempers softened by the trials that came upon them, in the six or seven years of the reign of Mary.

Upon the death of Edward, Mary ascended the throne, after an interval of ten days, during which it was occupied by her sister, Lady Jane Grey.

With the accession of Mary came all the calamities which always followed the triumph of Popery and the overthrow of Protestantism. She set about the work of extinguishing Protestantism in good earnest. Bishop Bonner was her chief executioner, and the expedition and ferocity with which he carried out the bloody views of Mary, show that she was at least capable of selecting very suitable agents to accomplish her purposes. The noblest and the purest men of England were brought to the stake and burnt for their Protestantism; and Cranmer was among them!

Such a tremendous example of violence and bloody persecution was given to England by Mary, that Protestants never after evinced a desire to advance their cause by such means. The lingering leaven of Popish discipline was effectually burnt out of them; and they were now ready to build the great temple of Protestantism.

After Mary, Elizabeth, the great queen of England, ascended the throne, and with her prosperous reign commenced the true era of English Protestantism. The triumphant reign of Elizabeth has been referred to, as far as necessary, to show the appropriateness of the symbol of the Sun, as representing the English nation. The chief glory of Elizabeth's reign was the establishment of Protestantism at home, and the support and encouragement she gave to it in other countries, where it was oppressed and persecuted. A nursing mother truly she was to the infant Protestant Church. Future revelations will call our attention again to this particular portion of England's history.

James I. followed Elizabeth, and it does not appear that the lustre of her reign was diminished by his government. His reign, upon the whole, was one of prosperity. The civil and religious institutions of the country were well fostered by James, and their foundations seemed to acquire increased strength and firmness. This was probably more owing to the life and vigor which Elizabeth's reign had infused into the national system, than to the energy of James.

Severe measures were resorted to to check and punish political offences. The axe and the block gave frequent warning of the inexorable purpose of the law to maintain its authority and support the crown. But in no instance was death or punishment inflicted upon the enemies of Protestantism, merely on account of a difference in religious sentiment; although the most aggravating and diabolical scheme of vengeance that ever suggested itself to the mind of man, was contrived and brought to the verge of success during his reign. I allude to the *Gunpowder Plot.*

But wrapped up, as this horrid purpose was in the secrecy of the profoundest malice, it was not hidden from Him "whose eyes are ever over the righteous," and God by his overruling Providence arrested and exposed the malicious scheme a few hours before the time appointed for its explosion, by which the king and parliament would inevitably have been destroyed. Measures had been concerted by the authors of this plot, to take immediate advantage of the consternation which the catastrophe would produce; and seize upon the throne of this Protestant nation, and bring it again under the dominion of Popery!

The moderation and Christian forbearance manifested by Protestantism in this trying hour was highly creditable to its principles, and goes to show how much more the doctrines and teachings of Christ and his Apostles were infused into the Church then, than in the days of Edward VI. It is very probable, if such a thing had occurred in his reign,

that Cranmer would have urged the stake and the fire as a just punishment for such a fiendish conspiracy.

The discovery of the plot just upon the eve of its explosion, threw all England into dismay. When the terror of the moment subsided and the people were assured of safety, the nation bowed, reverently bowed, with grateful hearts to God, who alone had delivered them from such a horrible calamity. The reaction of moral feeling against the Catholics was as overwhelming as the dismay of the Protestants had been at the moment of discovering the plot; and nothing that had ever happened before gave such a deadly blow to the cause of Popery in England.

The civil law inflicted condign punishment upon a few of those who had been entirely and personally concerned in the plot ; but this did not satisfy every one.

James was urged to adopt measures of violence against the Catholics generally, upon the ground that this was an act of that Church to destroy the Protestant Church ; but Protestantism is not a vindictive religion, and milder measures were pursued, kindlier feelings were indulged towards their deluded enemies ; forbearance and magnanimity conquered more than the fire and the sword would have done ; and the sun of Protestantism, by this forbearance, shone out with a brighter and purer light of true Christianity.

But we now come to that period of England's history, in which the revelation of the seal was fulfilled,—*The sun became black as sackcloth of hair.*

Charles I. succeeded to the throne of England upon the death of his father, James I., 1625. It was not long before the old question of prerogative and privilege was mooted between the new king and the parliament.

James, in his time, had exchanged opinions with his parliament on the same subject, with considerable sharpness on both sides ; but the boldest stand was taken on the ground of parliamentary privilege, under Charles I. His extrava-

gant views of royal prerogative, and exclusive episcopal authority, gave umbrage to many of his subjects, who occupied commanding positions in the nation.

Upon the subject of episcopal authority, Scotland had broken out in open rebellion in the reign of James, who undertook to make it the established religion of that country.

The Scots maintained and preserved their Presbyterian form of worship, and Church government. Their zealous devotion to the faith and forms of worship of their fathers, became more sensitive, from the fact, that Charles had brought to the Protestant throne of England a Catholic queen ! He had married the fascinating French princess, Henrietta. This was in the eyes of the Puritans of England, and the Presbyterians of Scotland, a scandal upon the nation ; and it was no doubt the cause, in a great measure, of that rancorous feeling which heated the angry contention between Charles and his parliament.

The Puritans were not satisfied that the civil institutions of the country were sufficiently purged from the leaven of Popery, even in the days of James ; and they now apprehended that the government of Charles would be directed, or greatly influenced by the intrigues of his queen and her Popish ecclesiastics, who attended and conducted her religious devotions. The queen had her chapel, where she worshipped according to the forms of the Catholic Church, and suitable functionaries of that Church were in constant attendance upon her hours of devotion.

Charles was devotedly attached to his queen. He was in the vigor and freshness of early manhood, and highly accomplished in the courtly blandishments of his day. Added to this, he possessed a cultivated mind, and a refined taste.

Henrietta, when Charles met with her, was the admiration of the French court, brilliant in her personal charms, and fascinating in her elegant manners. It is not surprising that the Puritans should indulge fears that such a queen would exert a powerful influence over their king. They took

it for granted it would be so, and conducted themselves accordingly.

But it does not appear that Henrietta on any occasion employed her influence over the king to injure the cause of Protestantism. Indeed she seems to have conducted herself in a discreet and dutiful manner, in the most trying circumstances of the angry parliamentary quarrel. She repeatedly urged Charles to sign bills sent up from the parliament, which his high sense of royal prerogative did not approve ; hoping, as she said, that it might pacify the discontent of the people, and lead to quietness in his government.

When the affairs of the country assumed a threatening and dangerous aspect, the queen retired to Holland for safety. Here she employed the crown jewels, which were rightfully in her possession, in procuring arms and men to aid the king in defending his prerogatives and his crown ; this act gave additional lustre to her character. These remarks are made to throw off the idea, that Popery had anything to do in bringing the blackness spoken of in the text over the sun.

Laud was Primate of England at this eventful period of her history. His extreme notions of episcopal dignity and authority, and his bigoted devotion to forms and ceremonies, so likened the Church of England to the Church of Rome, that Presbyterians and Puritans fancied they saw in the grasping dominion of English episcopacy, as much to apprehend and abhor, as they had ever seen in the Church of Rome. Archbishop Laud may have felt the influence of the splendid magnet, whose powerful attractions it was feared would disturb the measures of the king : and he may have been led unconsciously to conform his Church, as nigh as possible, to the Church of Rome, in order to gratify and conciliate the queen. Certain it is, he was wittily rebuked for his decided leanings to the Catholic forms of worship, by a lady of the court, who found the distance between the two Churches reduced to so small a space, that she stepped from the English Church into the Romish Church almost without

knowing it. Being questioned by Laud as to her reasons for changing her religion : "It is chiefly," answered she, "be-"cause I hate to travel in a crowd." Her meaning being demanded, she replied—"I perceive *your grace*, and many "others, are making haste to Rome, and therefore in order "to prevent my being jostled, I have gone before you."*

The fate of this unfortunate Primate was the same as that of the monarch. He lost his head amidst the darkness and confusion which he had probably aided in producing ; for it is said that he urged Charles to adopt severe and oppressive measures against the Presbyterians of Scotland, and to uphold and support the episcopal authority and supremacy at all hazards.

But his errors, it is hoped, were more of the head than the heart, and the expressions of sorrow to which he gave utterance, when he saw the calamities that had overtaken the Church and the kingdom, showed that he looked forward to the next world as a place of rest from all such scenes of affliction. When he was about to meet the cruel death to which he had been sentenced, he calmly remarked, that "there was no one more anxious to put him out of this world, "than he was himself to go out of it."

But to return to the affairs of the nation. The king vainly hoped to relieve himself from the unpleasant controversy with his parliament, by dissolving it. This step was frequently taken. But when the new parliament met, he uniformly found it more stubborn and unmanageable than the preceding one, so deep and strong was the current of national feeling setting in against despotism, both in Church and State.

The history of this unfortunate monarch's reign is full of interest to the Christian, the politician, and the philosopher. But the details of it need not be pursued in this work; they are referred to only so far as is necessary to show that the grand results fulfil the prediction of that portion of the sixth Seal which relates to the Sun.

* Russell's Modern Europe.

All the means within the reach of royal authority were employed by Charles to bring his parliament to submission, even committing some of its members to the Tower. But this step only produced an explosion of public indignation, and vastly increased the difficulty and danger of the king's situation.

The nation became agitated, and shook from one extreme to the other. The excitement was increased by every effort made to tranquillise it. The subject of dispute between the king and parliament at first related to granting him such supplies as he deemed necessary to maintain the dignity and authority of his government at home and abroad. But this became at length merely secondary; and the more absorbing matters of Episcopacy became the great paramount strife. Scotch Presbyterianism was arrayed against English Episcopacy; the Puritans were violent in their aversion to the vestments and ceremonies of the national Church, regarding them as relics of Popish pride and superstition.

The clouds gathered thicker and spread wider over the sky; every successive event increased the darkness that was rapidly enveloping the nation.

At length, the people were thrown into open rebellion. In all parts of the country was seen the hideous form of civil war: the king's army on the one hand and the parliamentary forces on the other. Desperate and bloody battles were fought, and history says that from three to four hundred thousand men were under arms in England, Scotland and Ireland; engaged in destroying each other. The opposing armies fought with fury and desperation; with feelings more malignant, perhaps, than they would have felt if they had been contending with a foreign foe.

The physical carnage was terrible; but the overthrow and destruction of all that moral sentiment and principle, which give strength and security to a nation, was more terrible still.

At length the parliament forces overcame the royalist

armies, and the king became a prisoner in the hands of his subjects. The nation was convulsed with rage and madness; and shook in all its extent under the wild consternation that had seized the people.

The Sun was now in darkness! the light and glory of England was obscured! She no longer shone upon the nations around her as she had formerly done. When they looked for her light behold they saw nothing but darkness; a cloud like the darkness of night enveloped and obscured the whole kingdom.

But there was still another act of violence; a deeper scene in this tragedy of civil war was yet to be exhibited.

The king, a captive in the hands of his own people, was derided and insulted by the crowds that annoyed him continually by their pressing and impertinent curiosity. He was brought to trial before a court having no legal right to try him, and upon charges without foundation in truth. In the depth of his misfortunes, Charles did not forget his royal dignity. He disdained the pretended authority of the court, and with the prospect of a violent death before him, he treated his presumptuous judges with royal contempt. He was declared guilty, and sentence of death was pronounced against him. His execution speedily followed. Thus the great Protestant nation dyed its hands in the blood of its monarch, the *head* of the nation and *head* of the *Church.*

This was the last accumulation of darkness, and the Sun, the brightest luminary of Protestantism, became black as sack cloth of hair. But the Church and the throne were now abolished! wild anarchy raved through the land, and the whole nation was like a raging sea under a tempest, rolling and dashing its angry billows in wild and hideous uproar.

As I conceive that the prostration of the Church and monarchy of England fulfilled that portion of the Seal now in hand, I have no occasion to pursue the history of these times any further. A few reflections upon these extraordi-

nary events will not be out of place, however, in concluding this notice of them.

That the kingdom over which this darkness was to spread, had previously been in a state of religious and civil pre-eminence above the other kingdoms of the world, is plainly declared by the fact that the Sun was its symbol. Of England I have already said that the temple of Protestantism was her glory in the days of Elizabeth and James I.

But why this kingdom should have been overthrown; why its whole fabric of civil and religious government should be torn in pieces by the hand of violence, is a question that can hardly fail to suggest itself to those who look into its mournful history of those times.

The history of England, from the beginning down to the times now under notice, has always had something remarkable about it,—something which would suddenly start up amongst the current of events common in those days to the nations of Europe; and point to a destiny quite different from the common aims and purposes of other nations.

Indeed the conviction is almost forced upon us by her own early history, that she had been elected from amongst the nations to be the great lighthouse of Protestant Christianity! —the dispenser of the gospel to the rest of the world!

In like manner was the Jewish nation elected to give the light of the knowledge of God, in that inferior dispensation. She stood up in the midst of the dark and idolatrous nations, and held out the light of the divine law, and instructed them in the Word of the Lord. But the Jewish nation was frequently brought into the most trying circumstances. It is very interesting to see in their history how God guarded the sacred purpose for which he had elected that people, from being thwarted and defeated by their constant inclination to adopt the customs and religion of the surrounding nations. This jealous care over them was the true cause of the frequent disasters and severe punishment which befell them! Their prophets always told them this, and warned them

against the corrupt and idolatrous worship of the heathen around them.

The Jews were frequently sent into distressing captivity as a mode of punishment for their relapses into idolatry; and at the same time that they might witness for themselves the abomination and heinousness of the heathen idolatry, in order more effectually to cure them of their propensity to embrace it.

We are not to suppose that the election of any particular nation by the Almighty, as an instrument of his glory, implies that the nation so elected is perfect before him. The history of the Jews gives the strongest proof to the contrary of this idea.

And upon the supposition that England had been elected to be the Sun of the Protestant religion, and to dispense its light to the nations of Europe, and all the world besides, we must not be surprised, when we see this nation thus honored and distinguished above all others by the appointment and providence of God, severely dealt with and fearfully chastised.

In order that the merciful purposes of God may be effectually carried out, the nation which he selects as the instrument of his gracious dispensations must be kept free from everything that would defeat the end of its appointment. Often in the judgment of men, the glory of God would be promoted by means which he sees would defeat it. They establish a system of Church polity in good faith and in great sincerity, and would force the world to conform to its principles, as being indispensable to the prosperity and perpetuity of religion. This might be true in the particular age in which they lived; but this very system, in some future age of greater light and improvement, might become the greatest hindrance imaginable to the progress of Christianity. Hence it is that forms and systems, both civil and religious, have to give way and undergo such modifications as the progress and improvement of the rational and intellectual power of the

human mind demand. With these preliminary remarks, we shall be the better prepared to inquire into the cause of the total overthrow of the Church and monarchy of England.

The English Church, in the days of Elizabeth, was very strong and authoritative in her Episcopacy, stern and inflexible in her government. This was just the kind of ecclesiastical government that England *then* required! Her people had but recently been emancipated from the oppressive domination of Popery. They were not in a moral condition to be put in the immediate possession of full religious liberty; indeed, they evinced this by giving no public expression of a will of their own in matters either of Church or State; a sense of their deliverance from religious captivity had not yet been fully realized by them. Like a man who has for a long time been confined in a dungeon, when brought to the light he is unable to bear it; he is no more capable of beholding the objects around him than he was when in his dungeon. But the power of vision after a while is gradually strengthened, and he is then able to see things as they really are. Episcopal prerogative, as well as the prerogatives of the crown, were upon the loftiest pinnacle of dominion in the reign of Elizabeth; but there was no clamor against either then. And in the reign of her successor, James I., no complaint was made against English Episcopacy. But by one act of his, the subject was forced upon the people. James attempted to overthrow the Church of Scotland, and to place English Episcopacy in its stead. The effort aroused the public mind, and stimulated it to an active inquiry upon the subject of religious liberty. James also had the misfortune to commence a dispute with his Parliament, and gave them some directions as to the extent of their rights, in a style and in language which could not but be offensive to them. He did not live, however, to carry his quarrel with the Parliament and the Presbyterians to any great length. But he had opened the eyes of the nation, and aroused prejudices which were never afterwards subdued.

Charles, on coming to the throne, found the Parliament ready to renew with him the quarrel which his father had left unfinished, and he furthermore found the public mind soured and dissatisfied with the extent of authority and powers of the Episcopacy.

This shows most clearly that while the Church and the monarchy continued to be what they were in the days of Elizabeth and James—the people were now very different in *their* views and feelings from those who had lived in the two previous reigns. The lapse of nearly a century since the establishment of the Episcopacy had witnessed a great change in the people. The public mind had made in that time rapid progress in the knowledge of government, and more liberal and enlightened views of religious rights and obligations generally prevailed. The free and unrestrained investigation of those subjects which the Protestant religion not only sanctions, but invites, led the people of England and Scotland to claim the right of establishing other forms of Church government, more congenial with their views of Christian liberty and their religious prosperity.

They did not reject Episcopacy upon the ground that it was unscriptural. They did not deny the right of the king to establish the Church under the peculiar forms which had been given to it, and to name it the National Church, if he pleased to do so. But they claimed and asserted their right to worship God under other modes, and to establish for themselves other forms of Church government. It was against the *exclusive* principle of the Episcopacy that they objected—against *the one Church* domination.

The Reformation had broken asunder the chains that for a thousand years had bound all Europe to one form of Church government and worship, and said to Christianity, "Now be "free!" Liberty of conscience, or the right to worship God according to the dictates of one's own conscience, was the early and spontaneous growth of the Reformation.

What would the Reformation have accomplished for the

triumph of Christian liberty, if it had only taken the sceptre of universal domination out of the hand of Popery, and placed it in the hand of an intolerant Episcopacy? How long would it have been before the Protestant Church would have reached as despotic and domineering a state as the Church of Rome ever had attained? It is idle to talk about her better principles and her sounder doctrines being a perfect security against any relapse into the old despotism of the Romish Church. Was not that the Church which the Apostles had founded, and laid deep in its very foundations the doctrines and principles of the Gospel? And it was not two centuries after she had overthrown Paganism, and placed Christianity on the throne of the Roman empire, before she made her appearance upon the *red horse of strife and blood, taking peace from the earth* in her desperate efforts to subdue every religious feeling and principle to her own despotic sway. It will be said that the art of printing, by spreading light and religious knowledge so generally amongst the people, would remove all danger of a revival of the old lust of hierarchal dominion, even if Protestantism was restricted to one form of Church government. But judging from the effects of this increase of religious light and knowledge amongst the people, as witnessed in the diversifying and multiplying the forms of Church governments and religious worship, we should conclude that the enlightened intelligence of mankind had decided that entire freedom in these matters was the only safeguard of the Christian Church, against the encroachments of human power, and the consequent corruption of her doctrines and worship.

The genius of Christianity is adapted to the endless variety of man's circumstances and condition in this world, and every attempt to chain it down to *one particular* form of ecclesiastic government and mode of worship, exclusive of all others, is no less insulting to its free and liberal spirit, than it is subversive of its humane and generous purposes.

It was the enlightened intelligence of the people of Eng-

land that revolted against the monopolising power of the episcopacy, and the extravagant notions of royal prerogative, and led them to overthrow and destroy both in the whirlwind of their sanguinary rebellion.

It is dangerous to attempt, either by civil or religious power, to arrest the progress of the human mind when in the exercise of its native freedom. It were just as mad as to attempt, with the old lumbering stage coach, to check the flying train upon the railroad, bearing down in its rapid flight, and crushing to atoms whatever stands in its way.

England grew wiser by the sad lessons which this calamity taught her ; and after the days of the Cromwells, when she reconstructed her monarchy and Church, much more respect was paid to the civil and religious liberties of the people. We leave England now for a while, but we shall be called to contemplate her again under happier auspices in the future developments of the prophecy. The next phase of the seal takes us into France.

And the moon became as blood !

France is represented under the metaphor of the moon. The light imparted by the sun, the moon, and the stars, represents the Protestant religion in contrast to the religion which for centuries before had kept the world in darkness,—which, in fact, had its seat upon the *black horse.*

These heavenly bodies are not adverted to at all under the developments of the seals, until the Reformation, and not then, indeed, until the Protestant religion had attained body and form, as it was in England, Scotland, and France. These are named as most prominent in their religious institutions, and as furnishing events of the deepest interest to Christianity, and at the same time serving as way-marks to indicate the onward progress of the Reformation. Many great and calamitous events had shaken the nations, and prostrated their governments, but all these were aside from the range of

the *seals*, because they had no particular connection with the existence or interests of religion.

The seals reject all events that do not directly or indirectly connect themselves with the Church ; and this is the proper rule to be laid down in attempting an explanation of the seals. But to return to the case of France.

The moon is an opaque body, possessing no light within itself, but still affording a considerable light by *reflection*. This was precisely the religious condition of France.

The throne was dark, because Popery was seated upon it : the religion of the French government was the Roman Catholic.

But in the midst of the nation there was a body of Protestantism so great and influential, that, as a modern historian says, " they formed a kind of *republic within the monarchy* by " the privileges they had obtained, and the fortified places, as " Rochelle, Sedan, and others, given to them as security for " the uninterrupted enjoyment of religious liberty."

The numbers, wealth, and political importance of this body of Protestantism, gave them an active participation in the administration of public affairs ; and thus from the body of this kingdom, dark in its Popish faith, there was thrown out the moonlight appearance, reflected by its Protestantism. This mild and beautiful moonlight illustration leads us inevitably to France. But, alas ! when we come to look at the whole nation, in its subsequent history, what shocking scenes of blood and anarchy disfigure the face of this moon ! But the seal announced this by its solemn warning,—*And the moon became as blood.*

We are not to confine ourselves entirely to one peculiarity of the French nation, in showing the application of this symbol, where there are other peculiarities tending to confirm the resemblance, although they may exist in a different period of her history.

The fitness of the metaphor is strikingly illustrated also in

the frequent revolutionary changes through which France has passed, since the great Revolution of 1789.

That terrible event seems to have sown the seed of revolution thick in the political soil of France, and from its growth the nation ever and anon reaps a harvest of blood, and assumes a new aspect in its government. Change of government by these revolutions has been as common to France, as changes are to the moon.

But the light of Protestantism ceased to be reflected from this opaque mass of Popery when the Huguenots were banished from France : *The moon became as blood.*

Before we look into the particular events that produced this change in the queen of the skies, a few remarks will be in place, going to show a striking coincidence between the struggles which covered the sun with darkness, and those that changed the moon to blood.

Both in England and Scotland we have seen the overthrow of the *one Church power !* In France the contest was of the same character ; it was produced by the same cause, and aimed at the same result,—the enjoyment of religious liberty. Free toleration, and an equal participation in civil rights, had been awarded to the Protestants of France. But this religious freedom, it was discovered by the vigilance of Popish prejudice, was rapidly undermining the *one Church,* and would probably subvert it if not arrested. This led to the sanguinary wars which so long desolated France, and gave rise to those perfidious plots and schemes contrived by the ruling powers of that nation, for the purpose of extirpating all Protestants not only from France, but from all the countries of Europe besides. One of these was the St. Bartholomew massacre already adverted to.

The contest was for religious freedom on the part of the Protestants, against the domineering power of the Roman Catholic Church,—the One-Church power of France. It was the Reformation, working out its great purpose of giving to mankind religious freedom. And in the progress of this

achievement no partiality was shown,—no flattering in its great purpose was allowed in favor of Episcopacy, any more than in favor of Popery, whenever Episcopacy set up the right to bind down the will of mankind to one form or system of Church government. Babylon, which always signifies oppression, was in the eye of the Reformation equally an adversary, whether it appeared in the robes of an intolerant episcopacy, or under a Popish tiara.

We will now look at some of the historical features of the *religious* wars of France, as they have been called.

Those wars continued from 1561 to 1598, when Henry IV. established the Protestants in their civil and religious rights by the edict of Nantes, by which a strong Protestant light was reflected from a nation in Popish darkness.

The following historical facts are taken from *Russell's Modern Europe* :—

In 1560, "The Protestants in France were become formi-
" dable by their numbers, and still more so by the valor and
" enterprising genius of their leaders. Among these, the
" most eminent were the Prince of Condé, the King of Na-
" varre, (no less distinguished by his abilities than his rank,)
" the Admiral Coligny, and his brother Andelot, who no
" longer scrupled to make open profession of the reformed
" opinions, and whose high reputation, both for valor and con-
" duct, gave great credit to the cause. Animated with zeal,
" and inflamed with resentment against the Guises, who had
" persuaded Francis II. to imitate the rigor of his father, by
" reviving the penal statutes against heresy, the Protestants,
" or Huguenots as they were styled by way of reproach, not
" only prepared for their own defence, but resolved by some
" bold action to anticipate the execution of those schemes
" which threatened the extirpation of their religion, and the
" ruin of those who professed it. Hence the famous conspiracy
" of Amboise, where they intended to seize the person of the
" king, and wrest the government out of the hands of the
" Guises, if not to dispatch them ; and although the vigi-

"lance and good fortune of the Princes of Lorraine dis-
"covered and disappointed that design, the spirit of the
"Protestant party was rather roused than broken by the tor-
"tures inflicted on the conspirators. The Admiral Coligny
"had even the boldness to present to the king in a general
"council at Fontainbleau, a petition from the Huguenots
"*demanding the public* exercise of their religion, unless they
"were allowed to assemble privately with impunity. He
"was treated as an incendiary by the Cardinal of Lorraine;
"but his request was warmly seconded by the Bishop of
"Valence, and by the Archbishop of Vienne, who both spoke
"with force against the abuses which had occasioned so
"many troubles and disorders, as well as against the ignor-
"ance and vices of the French clergy. An assembly of the
"states was convoked, in order to appease the public discon-
"tents; the edicts against heretics were in the meantime sus-
"pended, and an appearance of toleration succeeded to the
"rage of persecution. But the sentiments of the court were
"well known, and it was easy to observe new storms gather-
"ing in every province of the kingdom, and ready to break
"forth with all the violence of civil war. An edict had been
"published in the beginning of the year (1562) granting to
"the Protestants the free exercise of their religion without
"the walls of towns, provided they taught nothing contrary
"to the Council of Nice, to the Apostles' Creed, or the
"Books of the Old and New Testament. This edict had
"been preceded by a famous conference, held at Poissy, be-
"tween the divines of the two religions, in which the Cardi-
"nal of Lorraine, on the part of the Catholics, and the learned
"Theodore Besa, on that of the Protestants, displayed be-
"yond others their eloquence and powers of argument. The
"Protestant divines boasted of having greatly the advantage
"in the dispute, and the concession of liberty of conscience
"made their followers happy in that opinion. But the inter-
"ested violence of the Duke of Guise, or the intemperate zeal
"of his attendants, broke once more the tranquillity of reli-

" gion, and gave a beginning to a frightful civil war. Pass-" ing by the little town of Vassy, on the frontier of Cham-" pagne, where some Protestants having assembled in a barn, " under the sanction of the edict, were peaceably worshipping " God in their own way, his retinue wantonly insulted them. " A tumult ensued, the duke himself was struck, it is said, " with a stone, and sixty of the unarmed multitude were sa-" crificed in revenge of that pretended or provoked injury, " and in open violation of the public faith. The Protestants " over all the kingdom were alarmed at this massacre, and " assembled in arms under Condé, Coligny, and Andelot, " their most distinguished leaders ; while the Duke of Guise, " and the Constable Montmorency, having got possession of " the king's person, obliged the queen-mother to join the Ca-" tholic party.

" *Fourteen armies* were levied, and put in motion in differ-" ent parts of France. Each province, each city, each fam-" ily, was distracted with intestine rage and animosity. The " father was divided against the son, brother against brother ; " and women themselves sacrificing their humanity, as well as " their timidity, to the religious fury, distinguished themselves " by acts of valor and cruelty. Wherever the Protestants " prevailed, the images were broken, the altars pillaged, the " churches demolished, the monasteries consumed with fire ; " and where success attended the Catholics, they burned the " Bibles, rebaptized the infants, and forced married persons " to pass anew through the ceremony ! Plunder, desolation, " and bloodshed, attended equally the triumph of both par-" ties ; and, to use the words of a profound historian, 'it was " 'during that period when men began to be somewhat en-" 'lightened, and in this nation renowned for polished man-" 'ners, that the theological rage which had long been boil-" 'ing in men's veins, seems to have attained its last stage of " 'virulence and acrimony.'

"The Protestants had possessed themselves of several " cities of importance, so successful were they under their

"courageous leaders. They even threatened Paris for "a while, but removed their army in another direction. The "Catholics, under Montmorency and Guise, hung upon their "rear, and finally obliged them to give battle near Dreuf. "The field was disputed with much obstinacy on both sides, "and the action was distinguished by a very singular event. "Condé and Montmorency, the commanders of the opposite "armies, both remained prisoners in the hands of their ene- "mies! And what is yet more singular, the Prince not only "supped at the same table, but lay all night in the same bed "with his hostile rival, the Duke of Guise. So unaccounta- "ble were the manners of that age, which could blend the "most rancorous animosity with a familiar hospitality, that "appears altogether disgusting in those days of superior re- "finement.

"The semblance of victory was with the Catholics. But "Coligny, whose lot it was ever to be defeated, and ever to "rise more terrible after his misfortunes, collected the re- "mains of the Protestant army, and inspiring his own uncon- "querable courage into every breast, not only kept them in "a body, but took some considerable places in Normandy. "Meanwhile the Duke of Guise, aiming a mortal blow at the "power of the Huguenots, had commenced the siege of Or- "leans, of which Andelot was governor, and where Montmo- "rency was detained prisoner; and he had the prospect of "speedy success in his undertaking, when he was assassinated "by a young gentleman, named Poltrol, whose fanatical zeal "for the interests of the Protestant religion instigated him "to that atrocious violence. The death of this great man "was an irreparable loss to the Catholic party; and the "leaders of the Huguenots being inclined to peaceful mea- "sures, the war was closed by Condé and Montmorency, who "being equally tired of captivity, held conferences for that "purpose, and soon came to an agreement with respect to "conditions. A toleration of their religion, under certain "restrictions, was again granted to the Protestants; a gene-

"ral amnesty was published, and every one was reinstated in "his offices, dignities, and all civil rights and privileges.

"The peace thus granted to the reformers was only intended "to lull them asleep and prepare the way for their final and "absolute destruction. For this purpose, an interview had "been appointed at Bayone between Charles IX., now in his "sixteenth year, and his sister the queen of Spain. Gaiety, "festivity, love, and joy seemed to be the sole occupation of "courts, but under these smiling appearances was hatched a "scheme the most bloody and the most destructive to the re-"pose of mankind that had ever been suggested by supersti-"tion to the human heart. Nothing less was resolved upon "and concerted than the extermination of the Huguenots in "France, the Protestants in the Low Countries, and the ex-"tinction of the reformed opinions throughout *all Europe!* "This was designated by the Catholics as the Holy League. "It had not been concerted, however, with so much secrecy, "but that intelligence of it had reached Condé, Coligny and "other leaders of the Protestant party in France. Finding "the measures of the court corresponding with their suspi-"cions, they determined to prevent the cruel perfidy of their "enemies, and to strike a blow before the Catholics were "aware of the danger. In consequence of this resolution, "they formed in 1567 the bold design of surprising the king "and queen-mother, who were living in security at Monceaux "in Brie; and had not the court received some accidental "information of the conspiracy, which induced them to "remove to Meaux, and been besides protected by a body "of Swiss who came hastily to their relief, and conducted "them with great intrepidity to Paris, they must have fallen "without resistance into the hands of the Huguenots.

"A battle was soon after fought in the plains of St. "Dennis, where though the old constable Montmorency, the "general of the Catholics, was slain, the Huguenots were "defeated by reason of their inferiority of numbers. Condé, "however, still undismayed, collected his broken troops; and

"having received a strong reinforcement of German Pro-"testants, appeared again in the field at the head of a for-"midable force. With that new army he traversed great "part of the kingdom; and at last, laying siege to Chartres, "a place of much importance, obliged the court, in 1568, to "agree to an accommodation.

"This peace being but a temporary expedient, and sincere "on neither side, was of short duration. The queen-mother, "deceitful in all her negotiations, had laid a plot for seizing "Condé and Coligny. They received intelligence of their "danger and fled to Rochelle, and summoned their partisans "to their assistance. Thither the Huguenots resorted in "great numbers, and the civil war renewed with more fury "than ever. A severe battle ensued in which the Catholics "were victorious, and the brave leader of the Protestants, "Condé, lost his life.

"But this defeat, though accompanied with the loss of so "great a leader, did not break the spirits of the Huguenots. "Coligny, whose courage was superior to all difficulties, still "gallantly supported their cause. He encouraged the Pro-"testants rather to perish bravely in the field than by the "hands of the executioner. Their ardor was not inferior to "his own; and being strengthened by a new reinforcement of "Germans, they obliged the duke of Anjou to retreat, and "invested Poitiers. Coligny failed to make an impression "upon this place, and was obliged to raise the siege after "losing three thousand men. The impatience of his troops "and the difficulty of subsisting them, hurried him into the "memorable battle of Moncontour, in which he was wounded, "and defeated with the loss of near ten thousand men.

"The court of France and the Catholics, elated with the "victory, vainly flattered themselves that the power of the "Huguenots was finally broken; and therefore neglected to "take any further steps for crushing an enemy no longer "thought capable of resistance. What was then their sur-"prise to hear that Coligny, still undismayed, had suddenly

"appeared in another quarter of the kingdom, had assembled "a formidable army, accomplished an incredible march, and "was ready to besiege Paris! The public finances, diminished by the continued disorders, and wasted by so many "fruitless wars, could not bear the charge of a new armament. The king was therefore obliged, in 1570, notwithstanding his violent animosity against the Huguenots, to "enter into a negotiation with them; to grant them a pardon "for all past offences; to declare them capable of all offices "both civil and military; to renew the edicts for liberty of "conscience; and cede to them for two years as places of "refuge, and pledges of their security, Rochelle, La Charitas, Montauban, and Coignac.

"Thus an end was seemingly put to the civil wars of "France. But Charles was in no degree reconciled to his "rebellious subjects; and this accommodation, like all the "foregoing, was employed as a snare by which the perfidious "court might carry more securely into execution that project which had been formed for the destruction of the "Protestants. Their leaders were accordingly invited to "Paris, and loaded with favors; and in order to lull the "party into yet greater security, Charles declared, that, "*convinced of the impossibility of forcing men's consciences,* "*he was determined to allow every one the free exercise of his* "*religion!*

"After the negotiation for a marriage between the English queen, Elizabeth, and the duke of Anjou, was finally "broken off, a defensive alliance had been concluded between "France and England. Charles IX. considered this treaty "not only as the best artifice for blinding the Protestants, "the conspiracy against whom was now almost ripe for execution, but also a good precaution against the dangerous "consequences to which that atrocious measure might expose him. Elizabeth, who, notwithstanding her penetration and experience, was the dupe of the French king's "hypocrisy, regarded it as an invincible barrier against the

"enemies of her throne, and as one of the chief pillows of "the security of the Protestant cause. Even the leaders of "the Huguenots, though so often deceived, gave credit to "the treacherous promises and professions of the court; and "Charles, in order to complete that fatal confidence into "which he had lulled them by his insidious caresses, offered "his sister Margaret in marriage to the young king of Na-"varre (a Protestant). . .

"The Admiral de Coligny, the Prince of Condé and all "the most considerable men of the Protestant party, went "cheerfully to Paris in order to assist at the celebration of "that marriage; which it was hoped would finally appease "the religious animosities. Coligny was wounded by a shot "from a window, a few days after the marriage; yet the "court still found means to quiet the suspicions of the "Huguenots, till the eve of St. Bartholomew, when a mas-"sacre commenced to which there is nothing parallel in the "history of mankind, either for the dissimulation that led to "it, or the deliberate cruelty and barbarity with which it "was perpetrated. The Protestants as a body were devoted "to destruction; the young king of Navarre and the prince "of Condé only being exempted from the general doom on "condition that they should change their religion. Charles, "accompanied by his mother, beheld from a window of his "palace this horrid massacre which was chiefly conducted by "the duke of Guise.

"The royal guards were ordered to be under arms at the "close of the day: the ringing of a bell was the signal; and "the Catholic citizens, who had been secretly prepared by "their leaders for such a scene, zealously seconded the exe-"cution of the soldiery, imbuing their hands without remorse "in the blood of their neighbors, of their companions, and "even of their relatives; the king himself inciting their fury, "by firing upon the fugitives and frequently crying, 'Kill, "'kill!' Persons of every condition, age, and sex, suspected "of adhering to the reformed opinions, were involved in one

"undistinguished ruin. About five hundred gentlemen and "men of rank, among whom was Coligny, with many other "heads of the Protestant party, were murdered at Paris "alone; and near ten thousand persons of inferior condition. "The same barbarous orders were sent to all the provinces "of the kingdom; and a like carnage ensued at Rouen, "Lyons, Orleans and several other cities. Sixty thousand "Protestants are supposed to have been massacred in dif-"ferent parts of France.

"At Rome and in Spain, the massacre of St. Bartholo-"mew, which no Popish writer of the present age mentions "without detestation, was the subject of public rejoicings, "and solemn thanks were returned to God for its success, "under the name of the Triumph of the Church Militant!

"The massacre, instead of annihilating the Huguenots, "only rendered them more formidable. Animated by the "most ardent spirit of civil and religious liberty, inflamed "by vengeance and despair, they assembled in large bodies, "or crowded into the cities and fortresses in the possession "of their party, and finding that they could repose no faith "in capitulation, nor expect any clemency from the Court, "they determined to defend themselves to the last extremity. "After one of the most gallant defences recorded in his-"tory, the town of Sancerre was obliged to surrender, but "the inhabitants obtained *liberty of conscience!* Rochelle, "before which in a manner was assembled the whole force of "France, sustained a siege of eight months. During that "siege, the citizens repelled nine general and twenty par-"ticular assaults, and obliged the duke of Anjou, who con-"ducted the attack, and lost twenty-four thousand men in "the course of operations, to grant them an advantageous "peace.

"Thus ended the *fourth* civil war by a treaty which the "Court did not intend to observe, and to which the Protest-"ants never trusted.

"The miseries of France increased every day; all things

" tended to confusion. In the midst of these disorders, many " of the considerable men amongst the Catholics, displeased " with the measures of the Court, favored the progress of the " Huguenots. Charles fell ill and died of a distemper so ex- " traordinary, that it was universally considered by the " Protestants as a visible stroke of Divine vengeance;—the " blood exuded from every pore of his body! Though the " author of so many atrocious crimes, he was only twenty- " four years of age; and that unusual mixture of ferocity " and dissimulation which distinguished his character, threat- " ened still greater mischiefs both to his native country and " to Europe.

" The death of Charles IX., though the subject of rejoicing " among the Huguenots, was far from healing the wounds of " France, yet bleeding from the late massacre. His brother, " the duke of Anjou, succeeded him under the name of " Henry III.

" Henry, by the advice of the queen-mother, laid a scheme " for restoring the royal authority, by acting as umpire be- " tween the parties; by moderating their differences and " reducing both to a dependence upon himself. In prosecu- " tion of his moderating scheme, Henry entered into treaty " with the Huguenots, and desirous of preserving a balance " between the factions, granted a peace on the most advan- " tageous conditions. They obtained the *public exercise of* " *their religion*, except within two leagues of the Court; " party-chambers, consisting of an equal number of Protest- " ants and Catholics, were erected in all the Parliaments of " the kingdom,for the more equitable administration of just- " ice; all attainders were reversed, and eight cautionary " towns were put into their hands.

" This treaty of pacification, which was the fifth concluded " with the Huguenots, gave the highest disgust to the Catho- " lics, and afforded the duke of Guise the desired pretence of " declaiming against the conduct of the king, and of laying " the foundation of that famous *League*, projected by his

" uncle, the cardinal of Lorraine, an association which, with- " out paying any regard to the royal authority, aimed at the " entire suppression of the new doctrines.

" In order to divert the force of the League from the " throne, and even to obstruct its efforts against the Hugue- " nots, Henry declared himself at the head of that seditious " confederacy, and took the field as leader of the Catholics; " but his dilatory and feeble measures discovered his reluc- " tance to the undertaking, and some unsuccessful enterprises " brought on a new peace, which, though less favorable than " the former to the Protestants, gave no satisfaction to the " followers of the ancient religion. The king's moderation " appeared criminal to one faction, and suspicious to both, " while the plain, direct, and avowed conduct of the duke of " Guise on one side, and of the king of Navarre on the other, " engaged by degrees the bulk of the nation to enlist them- " selves under one or other of those great leaders. Re- " ligious hate set at naught all civil regulations, every pri- " vate injury became the ground of a public quarrel.

" The Huguenots, notwithstanding the valor of the king " of Navarre, who had gained at Contras, in 1587, a com- " plete victory over the royal army, were reduced to the " greatest extremity by the power of the League, and the " exorbitant ambition of the duke of Guise, joined to the " idolatrous admiration of the Catholics, who considered " him as a savior, and the king as unworthy of the throne, " only could have preserved the Reformers from utter ruin. " The citizens of Paris, where the duke was most popular, " took arms against their sovereign, and obliged him to aban- " don his capital at the hazard of his life. Henry's spirit " was roused by the dread of degradation from that lethargy " in which it had long reposed. He dissembled his resent- " ment; entered into a negotiation with Guise and the " League; seemed outwardly reconciled, but harbored ven- " geance in his heart. After Henry had fully taken his " resolution, nine of his guards, singled out by Loignacs, first

" gentleman of his bed-chamber, were introduced to him in
" his palace. He put a poniard into each of their hands,
" informed them of their business, and concluded thus: 'It
" 'is an execution of justice which I command you to make
" 'on the greatest criminal in my kingdom, and whom all
" 'laws, human and divine, permit me to punish,' &c. They
" were secretly disposed in the passage which led from the
" king's bed-chamber to his cabinet, and when the duke of
" Guise came to receive audience, six poniards were at once
" plunged into his breast. He groaned and expired. The
" cardinal of Guise also was dispatched, a man more violent
" than even his brother.

" Those cruel executions had an effect very different from
" what Henry expected. The partisans of the League
" were inflamed with the utmost rage against him, and every-
" where flew to arms. Rebellion was reduced to a system.

" In this extremity, the king, almost abandoned by his
" Catholic subjects, entered into a confederacy with the
" Huguenots and the king of Navarre; and being still sup-
" ported by his chief nobility and the princes of the blood, he
" was enabled to assemble an army of forty thousand men.
" With these forces the two kings advanced to the gates of
" Paris, and were ready to crush the League, and subdue all
" their enemies, when the desperate resolution of one man
" gave a new turn to the affairs of France.

" James Clement, a Dominican friar, inflamed by that
" bloody spirit of bigotry which distinguished the age, and
" of which we have seen so many horrid examples, had em-
" braced the pious resolution of sacrificing his own life in
" order to save the Church from the danger which now
" threatened it in consequence of the alliance between Henry
" III. and the Huguenots; and being admitted into the
" king's presence, under pretence of important business, he
" mortally wounded that prince while reading some supposed
" dispatches, and was himself instantly put to death by the
" guards! This assassination left the succession open to the

" king of Navarre, who as next heir to the crown, assumed " the government under the title of Henry IV. The reign of " Henry IV., justly styled the great, forms one of the most " memorable epochs in the history of France. But the pre- " judice entertained against his religion made one-half of the " royal army desert him on his accession, and it was only by " signing certain propositions favorable to their religion, and " promising to listen to the arguments of their doctors, that " he could engage any of the Catholic nobility to support his " title to the crown. * * * * * *

" Henry now saw himself in full possession of his kingdom; " the League was entirely dissolved; and the Catholics in " general seemed satisfied with his public profession of their " religion. The Huguenots, his original friends, alone gave " him any uneasiness. They had frequently since the king's " abjuration, but more especially since his reconciliation with " the See of Rome, expressed apprehensions on account of " their religion. Henry soon made them easy on that point. " He assembled the heads of the party at *Nantes*, and from " motives of policy, as well as of gratitude and tenderness, " passed the famous Edict bearing date from that place, and " which granted them everything that they reasonably could " desire. It not only secured to them the free exercise of " their religion, but a share in the administration of justice, " and the privilege of being admitted to all employments of " trust, profit and honor."

Henry not only secured the Protestants in their religious and civil rights, but he greatly promoted their pecuniary and domestic advantage, by encouraging their peculiar skill and industry in those arts which contributed so greatly to advance the prosperity of the nation during his reign. He was not only a generous and noble prince, but he was a kind and indulgent father to his people—to all his people!

The French nation in its religion was most remarkably personified in this king,—he was both a Protestant and a

Papist! As king of Navarre, he had been at the head of the Protestant army, and bravely fought with them for religious liberty, but found it expedient, nay absolutely necessary to change his religious profession, in order to secure his right to the throne, and enable him to establish the peace of the nation.

But after Henry had been crowned, and the Catholic league abolished, he established the edict of Nantes, which covered his Protestant subjects with peace and security, and to the close of his life he continued to show them the greatest kindness and indulgence.

It was this light of his Protestant principles, partially obscured by his outward profession of Popery, which made him the impersonation of France, symbolised by the Moon! And it was the kindness and good will always shown to the Protestants, equally with his other subjects, that brought this noble prince to a sudden and violent death. He fell under the hand of the assassin, the blood-thirsty and bigoted Ravaillac, who defended the horrid act upon the ground that the king was a Protestant in heart, though a Catholic by profession. In like manner the equally bigoted and blood-thirsty Clement assassinated Henry III., who had entered into a confederacy with the Huguenots, and in the same spirit of fanatical revenge was the duke of Guise assassinated by Peltrot, a Protestant bigot.

The frequency of those horrid crimes of assassination in France show that the public mind was in a state of cruel and desperate fanaticism, and that the two religious parties composing the nation were inflamed with the most invincible hostility towards each other.

To Christians who live in the present day of superior religious light, those scenes of violence and blood are shocking to the last degree. But, speaking in general terms, the Christianity of the times in which they were practised was of such a dark and degraded cast that it could mingle with such acts of desperate revenge without a shudder. This

was the early dawning of the great moral day which the Reformation had kindled in the human mind, fermenting and throwing off the foul accumulations of a long night of religious corruption and superstition. The bright day of Christian light which has succeeded those first dawnings, reveals the deformity of all such acts of violence.

The death of Henry IV. gave the throne to Louis XIII.

The reign of this prince renewed the civil wars of France with great violence; the Protestants were again assailed and compelled to take up arms in the defence of their rights.

Cardinal Richelieu, a man of rare endowments and indomitable courage, was called to aid the king in the administration of his government. But the cardinal's tact and skill soon left the king nothing to do but to give his royal sanction to the schemes and plans of his minister.

It was quite consistent with the Popish principles of the cardinal, that the position of the Protestant party should be the first object of his vindictive policy. He looked with a jealous eye upon those cities, held by them in virtue of the edict of Nantes.

As heretics could have no rights, no treaty obligations could be urged in their favor. This was the doctrine of Rome, and consequently was the rule of practice with this distinguished cardinal.

Richelieu, without delay, adopted measures for the capture of Rochelle, the chief seat of the Protestant power. He could bring no force against this citadel of Protestant strength, by any ordinary mode of attack, which could make any impression upon it; and he therefore resorted to the extraordinary, and as it seemed, impracticable measure of throwing a mole across the arm of the sea lying open to the city. With incredible labor and perseverance he succeeded, and thereby cut off those supplies which the city received by sea, from England and other countries. Fortifications were constructed on the land, and the city was in this way completely surrounded. With all hopes of succor cut off, and a dread-

ful famine raging in the city, after a siege of twelve months, it was surrendered to the arms of Richelieu! Thus fell the city of Rochelle, and with its fall, fell the political and civil rights of the Protestants. "Still they were allowed "the right of holding their individual property, and permit- "ted the free exercise of their religion." 1629.

I shall not pursue the wars of Louis XIII. against the Protestant religion. We have seen enough of their bloody details in the history already given.

For more than thirty years these religious wars desolated France and gave that beautiful land to scenes of the most barbarous and bloody outrage.

My object in reviewing these wars is to show the meaning of that part of the Seal which says, *And the moon became as blood.* This moon no longer shone with the mild, subdued light natural to her, but she hung in the heavens, rayless, bloody, dismal! Nothing could present a fitter emblem of a nation steeped in the blood of its own citizens.

THE FALLING OF THE STARS.

13. *And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.*

This is the next event described under this Seal.

Upon the death of Louis XIII. the crown of France descended to Louis XIV. and it was in the reign of this monarch that this part of the Seal was fulfilled.

The nation had settled down into a calm. The scenes of blood and carnage which had so long wasted its energies and blasted its prospects, subsided and gave place to peace, industry and prosperity.

The king was extremely fortunate in having a prime minister whose principles led him zealously to promote the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation; instead of depress-

ing one part in order to elevate the other. This minister was Colbert. Under his judicious management of its affairs the industry of the nation found full employment. The king, desirous of placing France above all other countries in point of opulence and splendor, stimulated the ingenuity and skill of artisans by the most liberal rewards. Every branch of manufacture, and the fine arts, was prosecuted with the utmost activity. No distinction was made in favor of one religious sect above another, but skill and industry were equally rewarded in all.

A policy so noble and generous could not fail to produce great prosperity, and France became in the reign of Louis XIV. the most splendid and luxurious court in Europe.

If any partiality was shown to one class of citizens more than another in the laudable strife for superiority in their work, it was in favor of the Protestants. They excelled all others in the manufacture of silks and other costly articles, so much that they became opulent, and their increasing wealth attracted the attention and roused the prejudices of their old enemy—Popery. And after the death of Colbert, who had always patronised and protected the Protestant artisans, these useful and ingenious sectaries, without the imputation of any civil or political offence, were again subjected to a cruel prosecution, reducing them to the necessity of forsaking their homes and their country and seeking a livelihood in foreign lands.

This persecution was distinguished by the repeal of the edict of Nantes, in 1685, just eighty-seven years after its promulgation by Henry IV. It had been the shield of Protestant rights ever since the days of Henry, and although Richelieu deprived them of their political functions, separating them from the affairs of the government, he did not venture to the length of repealing the edict,—but left the Protestants in possession of those religious rights which it guaranteed.

But Louis XIV., filled with the pride and glory of France, and utterly indifferent to those whose station was immeasur-

ably below the sphere in which he moved, left the Huguenots to the cruelty and bigotry of his ministers. Colbert was gone, and his place was filled by men of the spirit of Richelieu; and the Huguenots fell under the ban of their vengeance. The reader is referred to the explanation of the fifth Seal, for an account of the perfidious measures adopted and carried out against the Huguenots by the ministers of Louis XIV.

The Huguenots had at that time more than six hundred churches in France, with an appointed ministry for conducting regular public worship.

This numerous body of Protestant Christians scattered over the whole country, and by their separate societies and churches, giving out Protestant light in the night of Popish darkness, are most appropriately symbolised by the stars which glitter over the face of the sky, and by their feeble light prevent the earth from being shrouded in total darkness.

The revocation of the edict of Nantes scattered these societies, and either totally demolished their churches, or converted them to some common purpose; thus *the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs when she is shaken of a mighty wind.*

The exercise of irresistible power is compared to a mighty wind, whether it be righteously or unrighteously employed. And we see in the despotic exercise of power by Louis XIV. the mighty wind which shook the fig-tree, and cast its untimely figs to the ground.

14. *And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.*

15. *And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens and the rocks of the mountains.*

16. *And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us and*

hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb.

17. *For the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?*

This particular phase of the Seal refers to an event which shook all Europe, and threatened to involve its civil and religious institutions in one promiscuous ruin; this event was the French Revolution of 1789. This tremendous concussion of power and passion had its rise in the reign of Louis XIV., when France was in the zenith of her pride and glory.

The people of France then began to entertain and express opinions about the *rights of the people,* as well as the power of the throne. They had seen the civil and religious liberties of the Huguenots torn from them, and those inoffensive and industrious people themselves driven out of their country; and if such despotism could be practised upon one part of the nation at one time, they concluded that similar measures of cruelty might be visited upon another part at some other time. This opinion, that the *people* had rights as well as their rulers, continued to spread and strengthen itself, and became more bold and out-speaking whenever the measures of government called for public animadversion. It manifested itself in a more decided tone in the reign of Louis XV., and finally made its outbreak in the reign of Louis XVI. Like a small stream, which has its rise in some distant mountain's glen, first it murmurs slowly along; then by a broader and deeper flow it is impelled through the widening chasm; this shortly becomes a river, spreading over the valley, and, rushing onward with increasing force, it wheels and shoots through its winding course until it plunges over the foaming cataract, and thunders amongst the rocks below.

History must be consulted in order to gain any thing like an adequate idea of the horror of the French revolution. The Seal does not particularise, but speaks in general terms of its effects.

To keep to the spirit of the Seals, we must look for the connection that *religion* had with the revolution, and its consequences; and we must not forget that it is not the mere outbreak of popular violence that the prophet alludes to; his glance at this event comprehends as well its future effects as those which immediately sprung from it. France had no less reason to resist the religious tyranny that oppressed her, than she had to oppose the political or civil power which had ground her down to poverty. The tyranny and corruption she constantly beheld in the character of her religion, did not lead her to desire a reform of religion, as much as it led her to hate and reject all religions. In every aspect in which they contemplated the religion of their country, they could discover nothing but a grasping and impoverishing tyranny. When the crisis came, and the popular frenzy broke loose against the rulers, the priesthood was prostrated to appease the people, and then the priesthood denounced all religion as an imposture! France was thrown into open and avowed Atheism. "There is no God, but the God of Nature—"death is an eternal sleep," was the announcement of the earliest public acts of legislation by the new government. Nothing was seen, nothing known of religion, either Papal or Protestant; every thing that now attempted to impose any moral restraint upon the unbridled passions of the nation, was derided and trampled under foot. The people resolved to avenge themselves of a government that had only tyrannised over and oppressed them; and of a religion that had only deceived and impoverished them.

Thus the heaven, which means the religious as distinguished from the political or civil character of the nation, was rolled together like a parchment scroll. Every thing that upheld or appertained to religion, was as effectually removed from the minds of the people as pictorial representations are taken away from the sight when the canvass on which they are painted is rolled up. This part of the Seal

applies more particularly to France, where all religious institutions were, like her government, cast down and destroyed.

The spirit of Atheism, which had its birth in the violence and crime of the revolution, flew through Europe, and boldly assailed every system of religion, equally hostile to all. The Romish Church herself felt the blow, and the strong holds of her power shook under its effect, and in France they were entirely prostrated. The Church of England, and all Protestant Christianity stood aghast at the daring insults which French Atheism flung in the face of heaven; and trembled while it threatened to sweep the people away from their faith and steadfastness in the doctrines of Christianity. The Church of Germany and Switzerland, and in fact all Christendom, partook of the general agitation, and were alarmed at the impious effrontery of French Atheism. "Every "mountain and island were moved out of their places;" that is, the great religious institutions, no less than the smaller isolated Church communities, felt the shock, and were dismayed and alarmed at the threatened danger of losing all that they had gained by the Reformation.

The moral effects are further seen in the terror that seized people of all ranks and condition. This is expressed in the 15th, 16th and 17th verses. We are not to confine ourselves to the separate and fearful catastrophe of the revolution alone, in explaining these verses, but we may take a view of all that followed it.

For twenty-five years it was afflicting Europe with its tremendous consequences, in its political and moral effects. These verses represent the impressions made upon the religious sense of all classes and ranks of men by the scenes which then involved the peace and safety of Europe.

In a word they represent men as acknowledging the righteousness of God's judgments, and confessing that he visits nations as well as individuals for their crimes. It shows that the Reformation and the subsequent progress of Chris-

tianity had taught the people to connect the government of God with the acts of men.

The terror expressed by hiding themselves in the dens and the rocks of the mountains, and calling upon the mountains and rocks to fall on them and hide them, implies the further convictions produced, by the light of Christianity, upon the minds of the people; and that is, that no human power can deliver from the anger of God in the day of his great wrath. The sentiment that God's punitive judgments will certainly overtake national crime was more generally received by the powers of Europe after the French revolution than it ever was before. And this is what the Seal designs to exhibit as one of the great religious effects, brought out and made manifest by the revolution and the overthrow of kingdoms that followed it.

Another circumstance of lasting benefit to the Protestant religion arose out of the downfall of the French throne and Church, and the Atheism that came out of it. The religious disputes previous to this had been limited to subjects in controversy between Popery and Protestantism. But now another and a deeper subject is brought out. The bold and daring Atheism of France gave the lie to the whole system of Christianity! and demanded of her votaries to come forward and substantiate her claim to veracity. A host of able advocates met the challenge and gathered around the ark of their holy Christianity, and vigorously defended it from the violent assaults of its Atheistic enemies ; particularly the English divines in whose ranks were found the most pious and most learned men of the world. Their united efforts poured a flood of light in the defence of Christianity, such as had never been seen before, and by their labors chiefly, the Atheistical power was confounded and Protestant Christianity became more firmly established in her faith and doctrines. The Church now stood upon a stronger foundation than ever, by the great and powerful truths which this intellectual conflict brought up from the depths of Divine

revelation; her piety became more evangelical and consistent, and her worship more spiritual and enlightened.

Thus did God bring a great amount of good to the Church, out of the very evil with which her enemies expected to overwhelm her.

The Church of Rome had nothing to say in this triumphant vindication of Christianity; her mouth was shut; for not only was the nation that made this impious assault upon Christianity, *a part of herself*, but her priests at the time, publicly denounced all religion, declaring that Christianity was an imposture!

The following historic facts taken from the work of the Rev. Mr. Croly, will show the temper and spirit of the people of France at the time of their revolution.

"Three months from the commencement of the revolution "the Gallican Church was overthrown by the 'Decree for "'the abolition of tithes.' The whole of the parochial "clergy of France were instantly pauperized. The Church "of France was the first public body subverted by the revo-"lution.

"The king was deposed in 1792, and, five months after, "Jan. 1793, he was murdered. The Christian era was abol-"ished. The era of the republic was substituted. Sunday "was to be observed no more. The sections of Paris de-"manded at the bar of the Convention *the total suppression* "*of religious worship.* They passed through the hall shout-"ing, 'no more *altars*, no more *priests, no God, but the God* "'*of nature.*' This blasphemy was followed by a demand, "that the cathedral of Paris should be made the temple of "Reason.

"Gobet, the vicar-general of Paris, attended by a body of "his priesthood, abjured his functions and Christianity; ut-"tering the fearful words, '*all religion is an imposture.*' It "was ordered that in all burial places a monument should

"be erected representing sleep, with this inscription: '*Death*
"'*is an eternal sleep.*'"

The conclusion is inevitable that the French people were most deeply diseased in their principles and corrupt in their morality. This disease had been festering in them and corrupting their principles for more than a thousand years, without the presence of any system of wholesome scriptural religion to arrest it; except for the short time that the Huguenots were permitted to practice their religious services amongst them. When this great moral abscess, which had been forming in the body of this nation for so many ages, suddenly broke, just such consequences might have been looked for as are seen in the above extracts. A mass of fœtid matter came off, when the revolution broke up the system, which infected the whole moral atmosphere of Europe with its pestilential effluvia.

This is regarded in the view of prophecy as a most eventful epoch in the history of the world, as is manifest from the frequency with which the prophetic telescope is turned upon it. We shall have our attention called to it again under the fifth trumpet and also in other chapters where other and different agencies are employed in disclosing the great events of the future.

The prophet just now lays aside the seals and introduces the agency of angels to unfold to the Church the happy events which succeeded this frightful storm of anarchy. What he is now about to exhibit, he says, belonged to a day subsequent to that in which the events already described had their existence. And he is thus particular in order that every thing may stand in its proper place, and that we may not wander off to the old Roman empire nor to the times of the Jews for explanations of events that belong to the days of our own generation. He tells us in effect that we are not to look backward, but forward.

There were many scenes in this great drama, that occurred

between the point at which the prophet dropped the curtain of the Seal, in order to hasten to the glorious triumph of Christianity; and that, at which he takes up this happy change in the state of the Church. But we shall not lose these scenes; they will pass before us under the sounding of the trumpets, with a magnificence and grandeur that will at once awe and astonish us. But for the present let us attend to his description of the new position in which the Protestant religion in Europe is placed.

CHAPTER VII.

FOUR ANGELS KEEPING THE PEACE OF EUROPE.

1. *And after these things, I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.*

2. *And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God; and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,*

3. *Saying, Hurt neither the sea nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.*

The first three verses of this chapter announce the providential appointment of four powers, and the duties they were called to perform.

The first thing to be particularly noticed is, that this event followed the scenes of wild disorder and confusion, described in the preceding chapter, *And after these things I saw four angels*, &c. This remarkable circumstance occurred so recently, that its history is quite familiar to many now living. It is one of the monuments almost of the present day,—a monument to which the finger of prophecy points with such clearness and precision, that it cannot easily be mistaken for another. It was the four monarchies of Europe, who coalesced under the title of the *Holy Alliance*, in September, 1815, for the purpose of restraining the appetite for war, and preventing the powers of Europe from the further indulgence of their cruel propensity for that inhuman practice. This

was the first check that was given to the war spirit of Europe. War had been the sport and employment of her kings for many ages, and the people were dragged from one battle-field to another, to be employed in destroying each other like wild beasts, for the gratification of the pride and ambition of their kings. After war, in a fiercer form than it had ever appeared before, had made its desolating sweep over Europe, and crimsoned her vast fields with the blood of her people, this *Holy Alliance* firmly resolved that war should cease. Those powers were *England*, *Russia*, *Austria*, and *Prussia* ; quite sufficient to keep the rest of Europe in quietness. This is not the first time that these monarchs, in their associated capacity, have been distinctly pointed at by the finger of prophecy.

In the 2d verse it reads,—*And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given* (or had been given) *to hurt the earth and the sea.* They had received a commission previously of a warlike, destroying character, and had executed it ; as we shall see when we come to view the developments under the trumpet. But now the command to these same four angels is pacific ; they are to hurt neither the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees.

The spirit and purpose of this royal association, will better appear by the following quotation from the history of that day :—

" On the 26th of September, 1815, the three allied sove-
" reigns, namely, those of Russia, Austria, and Prussia, entered
" into a treaty at Paris, and which treaty received the sign
" of those potentates. By the tenor of this singular docu-
" ment, which received the name of the *Holy Alliance*, being
" couched in the most devout and solemn language, the high
" contracting parties declared their resolution to take for
" their sole guide, both in their domestic administration and
" foreign relations, *the precepts of the holy religion of Christ*
" *their Saviour !* In consequence, they bound themselves to
" the observance of three articles : The first of these united

"them in a fraternity of mutual assistance, and in the com-
"mon protection of *religion, peace, and justice;* which in the "second article was explained to mean, that they regarded "themselves as *delegated by Providence,* to govern three "branches of one and the same Christian nation, of which the "Divine Being, under his three characters, was the sole real "sovereign. The third article declared a readiness to receive "into the Holy Alliance all the powers who should solemnly "avow the sacred principles which had dictated it.

"Politicians were greatly perplexed to comprehend the im-"port of an engagement at once so vague and so serious, "which appeared to bind the contracting parties to nothing "more than as Christian princes they stood already pledged "to observe; and it was stated to have originated in a *fit of* "*enthusiasm,* which seized the mind of the Emperor Alexan-"der. A member of the British parliament brought the "subject before the House of Commons during the following "year, when it appeared from the confession of ministers, "that the Prince Regent had been solicited by a joint letter "of the three sovereigns to accede to it; and that he had in "reply expressed *his satisfaction* with the nature of the "treaty, and *given an assurance* that the British government "would not be one of the least disposed to act up to its prin-"ciples."*

Although the Prince Regent did not formally place his signature to the treaty of Alliance, as the other princes had done, he gave his hearty assent to its principles, and the assurance that the British government would readily and earnestly co-operate in carrying its purpose into effect.

Here, then, were the *four angels! holding the four winds of the earth, that they should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.* And what is very remarkable in the origin of the Alliance, is, that their appointment *by Providence* to this great duty, was distinctly recognised by them-

* Jones' Contin. of Russell's Hist. Mod. Europe.

selves, and that they should have had the prosperity of religion as much in view, as the quiet and peace of their own kingdoms.

To the believer in the guidance of the providence of God, by the moving influence of his Spirit upon the hearts of men, drawing them to those measures which his infinite wisdom plans for the promotion of his own glory, and the happiness of man, there is in the spirit and objects of this association the clearest evidence that it was appointed and brought about by God himself. The zeal evinced by the Emperor of Russia in forming this alliance, shows how strongly his mind was influenced on the subject ; perhaps he was the leader—took the first step in the sacred cause, and by that means gave rise to the remark, that it originated in a fit of enthusiasm, which seized the mind of the Russian monarch. Happy was it for the world then, and still more so now, that the Emperor yielded a prompt submission to this impulse of enthusiasm.

But we are not left to the uncertainty of conjecture as to how this alliance originated. The text declares in the 2d verse, that they were appointed and specially instructed in their high and holy duties, in order to the accomplishment of the beneficent purposes of God, in spreading the gospel for the salvation of men.

Politicians, who undertake to govern the world without allowing God to have anything at all to do with it, were utterly amazed at the singular course of these monarchs! The very name of the compact,—the "holy alliance," was a subject of scoffing and ridicule amongst the politicians of that time. They did not understand it. The influence that guided and brought those princes into this holy alliance, was as far above the low intrigue and vain ambition of the mere worldly-wise politician, as the heavens are above the earth.

The purpose of this appointment of the four Angels is expressed in the 3d verse. It was, that Europe might be brought into that state of tranquillity necessary to the

successful preaching of the gospel. That the wild and hideous war-cry which had stunned the ears of the nations for many centuries, might be hushed, in order that God might speak to the people by his word; and that the people might be prepared to hear the messengers of peace and obey the call of the gospel. Every one knows that a state of war is very unfriendly to the prosperity of religion, even amongst a people who have had the benefits of its light and instruction; and how much greater must the hindrance be which it opposes to the spread of the gospel where the people never had embraced its doctrines? The passion, the revenge, and the uproar of war, are in fact so utterly *at war* with the calm, peaceful, kind, and sympathising spirit of the religion of Jesus Christ, that, where war rages, this spirit cannot live. The furious winds of human passion, the vindictive tempers of men that break away like a tempest, and sweep peace from the earth, were firmly held by these four Angels. The demon of war was chained down at their feet, and "religion, peace, and justice" were protected.

What a happy change! The fields that had been the theatre of bloody conflicts and the death struggles of contending armies, now waved their rich and abundant harvests, and the varied and delicious fruits of the earth were poured into the lap of peaceful industry. Then it was that the Angel spread his mighty wings, *and commenced his flight through the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.* Chap. xiv. ver. 6.

The effects of this state of order and peace are the next subject for our attention. But before we enter upon it, let us make some explanations of the peculiar terms and figures in the 2d and 3d verses.

And I saw another angel ascending from the East, *having the seal of the living God.* This word East, is not to be taken in a geographical sense, any more than the angel

spoken of in connection with it is to be regarded as possessing personality. The East was almost identified with the advent of Christianity: *We have seen his star in the east.* Wise men came from the east, and worshipped him, confessing his Messiahship and heavenly origin, by presenting gifts suitable to persons of the highest honor and dignity.

The East here means Christianity, and the angel ascending from it having the seal of the living God, was the spirit and power of Christianity. These are the *Seal* of the living God, witnessing to the redeemed their favor and acceptance with God. And this angel cried with a loud voice; that is, deeply and powerfully impressed the minds of the four angels, and kept them firmly and unchangeably fixed upon the object of their appointment, so that they should not be turned from it, nor be tempted to interfere with, nor hurt the *earth*, nor the *sea*, nor the *trees;* they were not to overthrow or change governments, signified by hurting the earth; nor to disturb the *sea*, by agitating the people with any measures of a revolutionary tendency; nor to hurt the trees, by interfering with, or doing violence to, established religious institutions; whether they were trees that bore fruit, or were useless cumberers of the ground. Every thing else was to be let alone; and their whole attention was to be given to the one great object of their appointment,—*to prevent war, and keep the peace of Europe.* And a reference to the history of those powers at that time, will show how exactly their proceedings conformed to the instructions of this angel! They might have taken possession of the rest of Europe and divided it off in portions to themselves. Wasted, broken down, and torn to pieces as the most of Europe was, by the surging billows of desolating war, it lay helpless and almost lifeless, at the feet of these four monarchies; but they did not touch a thing belonging to these crippled and impoverished nations.

THE SEALING OF THE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOUR THOUSAND.

No precise limit as to time is fixed to the commission of the four angels, nor is this of any consequence. What we know is, that their interference did check the progress of war, and did maintain a state of unusual tranquillity in Europe, during which the Gospel seed was scattered amongst the nations, and had time to take root and grow up to great strength; so that ever since that time, Christianity has exerted a powerful influence, meliorating the political condition of the people, and greatly improving their religious character.

A word in relation to the sealing. In ancient times the practice of branding or marking individuals upon the forehead or shoulder, with the name of the owner, was common. The purpose was to distinguish them as the property of some particular owner, and to secure them from being taken and enslaved by any other. We are to understand the sealing spoken of in the text, to be the security with which the people of God would henceforth enjoy their religious rights,—they would be distinguished as the people of God, and would not be molested or oppressed by the civil power any more. Persecution on account of a difference in religious opinion, or mode of worship, would no longer be tolerated. The seal, his favor and protection, will henceforth distinguish them as his people.

4. *And I heard the number of them which were sealed; and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*

5. *Of the tribe of Judah were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.*

6. *Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nepthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.*

7. *Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.*

8. *Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.*

9. *After this I beheld and lo! a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations and kindreds, and people and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands,*

10. *And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*

11. *And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God,*

12. *Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.*

13. *And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?*

14. *And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

15. *Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.*

16. *They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.*

17. *For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

The very particular manner in which the description of the sealing is given, imports that its meaning is a matter of consequence to the Church.

Opinions on this subject have been as various as the writers upon it, each one having an explanation differing from all the rest ; but none of them, as it appears to me, so far as I have been able to consult them, have given a consistent view of the subject.

The opinion that the twelve thousand out of each tribe, signifies nothing more than that a *certain* number is given for an uncertain number of those who were saved out of the ancient twelve tribes of Israel, was entertained by an ancient divine and commentator. But with the greatest deference to his vast and varied learning, I must say that I cannot see how this explanation can, upon any rational principle of interpretation, be reconciled to the text. All those who were saved out of the respective tribes under the Jewish economy, must have been saved while those tribes had an existence. But these ancient tribes had no distinct and separate existence, either in a civil or religious way, when the prophet uttered this vision. And it would be a departure from the consistent course of interpretation, to look for the meaning of a prophecy *anterior* to its date ; that is not a prophecy which tells of things that are past.

But the prophecy now before us could not have referred to events which occurred earlier than the date of the sixth seal ; and therefore the idea that it had any sort of reference to the proportion of the saved out of the ancient tribes of Israel cannot be sustained. The Rev. Mr. Croly takes quite a different view from that already stated. Satisfied that we must look for the meaning of this vision at a date which would correspond with the latter-day history of the Church, he explains it as an allusion to the *completed* state of the Church, thus :—
" The number 144,000, the square of twelve, the number of
" the Apostles, implies a *complete* body, or regulated Church,
" raised upon the foundation of the Gospel. The *square* was
" a customary sign of perfection." Granting to the reverend author the merit of an ingenious exposition, I must nevertheless dissent from his opinion. I believe that the teaching of

this vision goes further, and covers more ground than these opinions suppose.

Some general remarks upon the ancient twelve tribes, will prepare the way for the view I entertain of the meaning of this part of the prophecy.

The Jewish nation and the Jewish Church, we may say, were synonymous. It presented this distinct division of the people into twelve tribes. The number is of no consequence, as to why it was not less or greater ; there were twelve tribes, a numerous company divided into so many separate and distinct bodies, each having its own proper designation differing from the rest ; but in their aggregate these twelve tribes made up or constituted the Jewish Church.

These tribes of course occupied different positions, and pursued different occupations ; and perhaps to the great body, one tribe was not distinguished from the other. But in the temple service, as well as in the service of the state, the different tribes were distinctly known under their various and appropriate names, and all were considered equally entitled to whatever benefits God had appointed for the good of the whole Church or nation. These tribes, as has been remarked, must have occupied very different stations, and very likely they entertained very different opinions upon matters left to the discretion of the people, and formed judgments as widely different as were their occupations and habits.

Those ancient tribes of God's people have never been forgotten in the various communications and revelations of his will and his law, made to the Church since their day, but are frequently referred to in the language of favor and compassion.

In the instance before us the prophet employs them undoubtedly for the purpose of illustrating the Christian Church under its *reformed* and *regenerated* character. This Church is *one,* as a body, but it exists under various and separate companies, or members, as the Jewish Church did in the twelve tribes.

But the point at which explanation is most required, is, why *precisely* the *same number* should be sealed *out of each tribe!* This is the point at which Mr. Croly's explanation fails ; and it appears to me to be just the one upon which the prophet lays the greatest stress.

The sealing of this particular number from each tribe, has no reference at all to the numbers saved by the Christian religion. Its purpose is not to give a numerical representation, but to show an *equal* degree of favor to all the members of the body,—*equal* grace and *equal* mercy to all the spiritual tribes that constitute the great Christian Church ! The sealing of twelve thousand out of each tribe, implies *equality* not *numbers !* The 9th verse refers to the saved in all the Church, and speaks of them as a great multitude which *no man could number !* This is conclusive evidence that the sealing of the twelve tribes had no allusion to the numbers saved.

This view of the text presents an essential link in the chain of these prophecies.

The centuries preceding the Reformation had been under the dominion of the Church of Rome. She claimed for herself the religious government of all the earth ; and wherever the exercise of religious worship was attempted in any part of Christendom, apart from her authority, there the exercise of her power was felt in one form of persecution or another.

But the prophet is now representing the Church freed from the grasp of this hierarchal tyranny :—when the free exercise of religion, and of religious opinion, were secured to all men ; when Christians could meet together and worship God according to the dictates of their own conscience.

The one Church despotism was now overthrown, or limited to those who voluntarily embraced her communion. The great sword was taken out of the hand of him that sat upon the red horse.

The storms of war were hushed by the conservative power of the four angels ; and the calm of peace gave the world to the influence of the Gospel.

The free exercise of religious opinion amongst people of different languages, having peculiar national habits and pursuits differing from each other, would unavoidably produce different forms of worship, of Church government, and different modes of dispensing the ordinances of the Gospel. And to meet this variety in forms of worship and Church government, and to rebuke the arrogant pretension of Popish dominion over all, and at the same time to admonish the Reformed Churches against setting up any such claims to exclusive rights in the Lord's vineyard, and becoming the proud monopolisers of all Gospel prerogatives, the prophet groups these dissenting and varying forms of Christian denominations under the figure of the twelve tribes, and represents an *equal* number as sealed out of each tribe, signifying thereby that the mercy and grace of God equally abound to all denominations that hold the essential doctrines of the Gospel,—who hold the *truth in righteousness.* And the *completeness* of the Church consists in the zealous and harmonious effort of these various denominational tribes, in spreading the Gospel, and bringing men to the knowledge of salvation. This figure of the twelve tribes is remarkably coincident with the very particular description given of the Church by the Apostle in 1st Cor. 12 : *For the body is not one member, but many,* &c.

The Psalmist, too, speaks of the Gentile Church, in his own beautiful and poetic language, to the same effect : *There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of our God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High.*—Psalm 46.

This river represents the great fountain-head of Gospel grace, whence it is conveyed by the various streams of different denominations, throughout the wide extended city, or kingdom of grace on earth.

Like the waters which fill the fountains, and pour their refreshing streams through numberless tubes to every part of the crowded city : One great tube would not answer the purpose of supplying the wants of the city ; but by multiply-

ing them, and giving them various forms and positions, every part of the city has a stream, and every family, from the highest to the lowest, gets a supply of water from the great reservoir.

> "This grace alike to all abounds,
> So plenteous is the store;
> Enough for all, enough for each,
> Enough for evermore."

There were two of the original tribes that are not named here. These were Dan and Ephraim. Both of these tribes became corrupted by *idolatry!* and their heads are left out, rejected by the prophet as unfit to represent the Christian Church. Levi and Joseph are substituted in their stead. We learn from this that if any of these different sects of Christians, either in doctrine or practice, shall promote idolatry, or any error pernicious to the spirit and purity of Christianity, they are rejected—they do not wear the seal of God's approbation.

The Church knows—all Christendom knows—the wide-spread efforts which this peaceful period of the world produced in spreading the Gospel amongst the nations of the earth. England and America entered this vast field of Christian labor with a zeal and harmony befitting the glorious work before them. Bible Societies, Domestic and Foreign Missionary Societies, speaking in almost all the languages of the earth; Tract Societies, preaching the Gospel, enforcing its truths with fervor and faithfulness; public and private means of grace ever presenting themselves, and inviting the people to forsake their idolatry and superstition, and embrace the light and peace of the Gospel.

These various means diffused the knowledge of the Gospel, and poured the waters of life over the continents, and amongst the nations that sat in the shadow of death, famishing in the drought of heathen ignorance and Popish delusion. The happy effects of this diffusion of the Gospel are narrated in

the remaining verses of the chapter. *A vast multitude which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.*

This vast multitude represents the confidence and freedom with which the people now professed their faith in Christ, and worshipped God ; the white robes, and palms in their hands, show the purity and triumph of their religion.

This picture of the triumph of Christianity concludes the sixth Seal.

There are embraced in this picture three principal characteristics which distinguish it from the religion of blood and persecution, which also bore the name of Christianity.

The first and prominent characteristic of the regenerated Church is, that she *stands* before the throne and before the Lamb; and offers the homage of her praise and thanksgiving to God and the Lamb *direct!* and not through the mediation of saints, either on earth or in heaven; nor through any vicegerent of God on earth; but to God and the Lamb *only* are her songs of praise addressed. Chap. 9, ver. 10.

The second characteristic is the perfect order that pervades the worship of God in his holy temple. God is a Being of infinite majesty and holiness, and his worship should be conducted with purity, fervor and dignity. This perfect order is expressed by the angels standing round about the throne, and about the elders, and the four beasts; and they fall before the throne on *their faces* and worship God. To impress us with a proper idea of the unequalled majesty of the supreme Being whom the Church on earth worships, *the angels* are represented as falling upon their faces, before the throne, when they offer the homage of their gratitude and praise. This part of the scene also imports the spiritual intercourse and communion, which the redeemed on earth enjoy with the spiritual and invisible Church above, and affords a

striking commentary upon the words of the Apostle, "Are "they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for "them who shall be heirs of salvation?" The spiritual life of the Christian on earth is sustained and strengthened by the fellowship he has with spiritual influences from heaven.

A farther view is also given in this picture, representing a free and unrestrained familiarity between the Church below and the Church above. Such a union and mingling of heavenly and earthly spirits was remarked upon by one of the elders, who asked the prophet the question, "What are "these who are distinguished by the peculiarity of their "white robes, and whence came they?" The prophet modestly replied, "Sir, thou knowest." Yes, this elder knew who they were; but in imitation of our Lord when he would awaken the attention of his disciples to any subject which he wished deeply to impress upon their minds, he would ask them questions as if he desired to be informed himself about it. So this elder, to give greater emphasis to what he was about to say, asked the question and then answered it himself:—"These are they which came out of great tribula-"tion and have washed their robes and made them white in "the blood of the Lamb." Literally interpreted,—they are the Christian Church, which has for centuries waded through great tribulation; she has passed through the anathemas and persecutions of Popery; she has struggled through the bloody wars, waged upon her by Spain, France, and other tyrannical powers; she has survived the rack, the fire, and the gibbet of the Inquisition, and here she stands before the throne of God and the Lamb, robed in the righteousness of her victorious faith in the blood of Christ, and wearing the seal of Heaven's approbation upon her forehead! She now worships God openly and boldly, and serves him in his temple, day and night, without hindrance or fear. And God dwells among them! this is made manifest by her living faith, her fervent charity, and the elevated and dignified piety which distinguishes her members and clothes them with

the white robe. If there is a Church where these living testimonials are not seen, God does not dwell in that Church!

The next and last peculiarity is the entire freedom which the Church of Christ is henceforth to enjoy from the persecution which so cruelly oppressed her in the tribulations of her earlier history.

This security and prosperity of the Church are beautifully illustrated in the language of the 16th and 17th verses: "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither "shall the sun light on them, nor any heat." These comprehend all the various afflictions and sorrows that the Church suffered in the day of her trial, after the first dawning of the Reformation. But a cessation of these afflictions is not all that distinguishes her present happy condition. She is freely supplied with the bread and water of life. Every grace and every spiritual good are freely and copiously bestowed upon her, to promote her spiritual life. And the former sufferings, in the times of her persecution, will be entirely forgotten in the fullness of her present joy and prosperity. This is signified in the concluding sentence of the last verse,—*And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.*

This is the happy condition of *Protestant Christianity in this our day!* In the midst of the nineteenth century, this picture of the Church, sketched by the pencil of prophecy almost eighteen hundred years ago, has its glorious fulfilment. Happy are the people who live in this day of gospel light and religious liberty; for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and will lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. With these absorbing contemplations we pass to the seventh and last Seal.

CHAPTER VIII.

OPENING OF THE SEVENTH SEAL. SILENCE IN HEAVEN.

1. *And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.*

Perhaps no part of the Book of Revelation has been regarded with a more anxious curiosity than the announcement with which this seal opens. To know its import, and to learn what could have occurred to impose a solemn pause, or silence, amongst the millions of the upper heavens, to which the text is commonly understood to refer, has been a question of intense anxiety with most Christians. The very mysterious character which has been given to the text, arises from a misapplication of the terms employed in its announcement. If the term *heaven* had been restricted to things *in this world*, where its proper import is to be looked for, perhaps much less anxiety to learn the meaning of this half hour's silence, would have been experienced.

If there ever had been a period when the anthems of the heavenly hosts were hushed, and all heaven was struck with silence, it is quite certain that there would be no account of that event given to man, because it could not concern him to be made acquainted with such things.

But the things of earth, even the most pure and elevated, belong to him, and do connect themselves with his temporal and spiritual interests.

The heaven mentioned in the text, is the institution of Christianity,—the Gospel system, with its public and general means of diffusion over the earth.

Those means are to be considered as the voice of Christianity, by which it calls upon man, and warns him to repent; and at the same time encourages his hopes and efforts for salvation.

The term silence is not to be understood as implying the cessation of noise or sounds, according to its common meaning, but being figuratively used here, it has a very different meaning.

The Church has experienced frequent interruptions of her prosperity, arising from various causes. Sometimes they have arisen from an undue participation in the politics of the country; at other times, from the overpowering influence of worldly prosperity, and thirst for worldly honors and wealth.

But these are only occasional and partial interruptions in the way of her onward march; they do not come up to the import of the text,—they are *momentary* interruptions, but do not amount to a *total silence.*

This silence must be looked for when the whole Gospel economy, in its labors of persuasive mercy, shall cease—when its voice, now speaking through the various channels, or means of grace, will be heard no longer.

This explanation, I am aware, will fall very harshly upon ears accustomed to hear no other sounds but those of *mercy.* And it will meet with no favor from those whose views of Christianity seem never to have embraced the idea, that the divine government has in it a season of *judgment,* as well as a season of mercy.

Any human reasoning on this subject would be quite out of place; we will hear nothing but the Word of God. The Gospel day has a limit, beyond which its present means of mercy will not go. This truth is taught and inculcated by Christ and his Apostles in almost innumerable instances. As I shall have occasion to dwell upon this subject more at large hereafter, I shall for the present refer to only two sayings of our Lord, as conclusive upon this point:—First, *My Spirit shall not always strive with man.* This term man comprehends

the whole human race ; and although it may be realised in the experience of some individuals, whose stubborn rejection of the influence of the grace and Spirit of God has closed their day of grace, and left them the hopeless subjects of divine wrath, even while they lived; yet this does not interfere at all with the application of the text to all mankind.

The second text is also the words of our Lord : *And this Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations ; and then shall the end come.* The end of the Gospel dispensation ! Christ was not speaking to his disciples about the physical or natural world, nor just then was he speaking of the destruction of the Jewish polity, but of the Gospel of the kingdom ; the end of this should come, when it had fulfilled its appointment, by bearing its testimony to all nations.

The Apocalypse gathers up the doctrines and teachings of our Lord and his Apostles, and reflects them as from the face of a mirror, in the sublime and varied scenes which it records.

In the sixth seal the prophet points out the Church in her triumphant state in the 9th verse : *After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb.* The Gospel dispensation will have its end in the period of the seventh seal ; there is nothing of the Gospel economy mentioned in this seal. It opens a new order of things in the earthly heaven, which is characterised by a total suspension of the various and numerous means of grace which formerly spread the Gospel amongst the nations.

The idea intended to be conveyed by this state of silence is clearly this :—that another and a different era of the Christian Church now has its commencement ; and none of its former peculiarities under the Gospel era will appear in this. Silence implies, that sounds once familiar to our ears, are no longer heard,—the Gospel dispensation no longer exists.

The duration of this silence is of no consequence ; it is merely used to signify the termination of that which formerly

existed ; it is a *figure*, and a half-hour's silence answers the purpose of its meaning, as well as if it had continued for ages.

But the brief period of half an hour, while it serves to show the complete cessation of that which once existed, also denotes that the moral powers of the Church are not in a state of torpor or dull supineness in this new era, any more than they were in that which has passed. The same active zeal will be manifested in carrying out the glorious scheme of the divine government that was witnessed under the gospel dispensation. The divine government goes on, although dispensations cease. And every successive era in this government reveals a higher and more glorious view of the great economy of Heaven in the redemption of man.

The anxiety to know what will occupy the moral energies of the Church in this new era, has, I dare say, been felt by the reader. But I must follow the example of the prophet, who just introduces us to it, and says, *there was silence in heaven for the space of half an hour;* then leaves us without saying another word about the seventh Seal.

There is a vast amount of filling up required to complete the full picture of this Seal; but the appropriate scenes for this work are amongst the future visions of the prophet, where we shall meet with them in due time. He throws open the door of this last Seal and points to the grandeur of its solemn silence; then turns away to show us the political scenes which arise under the trumpets, and bring these up to the same point where the seals terminate.

A few reflections upon the evening twilight of the gospel day will not be out of place.

As *the night in which no man can see to work*, comes over the world, the restraints of the gospel will become less influential. As the day of grace declines, the powers of darkness will multiply their force and arouse the spirits of evil to acts of violence and wickedness. Just as the wild beasts of the forest that are restrained and kept concealed by the broad light of the day, come out of their hiding-places with fero-

cious boldness when the sun withdraws his light from the earth.

The world will never know until that period arrives, how much it was indebted for its peace and safety, to the restraining influence of the gospel. But as this is withdrawn, that which was kept down by it will rise up with a bold and daring front.

Acts of wickedness and violence will be every where perpetrated in defiance of all authority. Laws will no longer hold men in due subordination, nor will the fear of their penalties deter them from most daring acts of violence.

This spirit of general insubordination will be manifest even in the youth, whose vices and profanity will rival the most corrupt and reckless of mature age.

Infidelity and skepticism in a thousand forms will spring up and scoff at all that is godly; and by its ensnaring arts, will draw away many from the paths of righteousness.

Religious communities, too, will feel the shock which these latter days will produce, agitation and discord will try their faith and patience, and many will fall away whose profession once inspired confidence in their principles.

In these remarks, I only repeat, in different language, what was said by Christ and his apostles, when they spake of these latter days of the gospel dispensation. Special reference was had to these times when our Lord said, *And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.* And Peter says, *In the latter days perilous times shall come, and scoffers walking after their own lusts, impiously and boldly denying the truth of God's word.*

These are not given as individual cases, or solitary instances of rare and unblushing wickedness, but as the general character of a particular age of the world, distinguished as the latter days and the *last* days.

Much stress is laid by our Savior upon the signs of the times, and Christians are urged to the duty of giving suitable attention to them. It is not by looking just around us

that we are to discover these most important tokens, but by a broad and comprehensive view of the face of Christendom; as men look upon the face of the whole sky to learn the signs of the weather.

This is a subject of such vast interest to the Christian that none duly impressed with its importance, can fail to make the signs of the times a matter of serious thought and observation.

It is consoling to know that in the midst of these perilous times of abounding iniquity, by which thousands will be swept away, who were indifferent and careless in their religious life, the strong in faith and firm in purpose will still advance in the life and power of religion; being built up in their most holy faith, standing steadfast and immovable, above the surrounding flood of ungodliness.

THE SEVEN TRUMPETS.

Previous to the opening of the Seals, there is a prelude which is intended to give the character of the events to which the Seals refer. This prelude is embraced in the fifth chapter, from the eighth verse to the conclusion of the chapter. The import of it is a spiritual and devotional exercise by those who are actors in its scenes. There is nothing of fire, thunder, and lightning, and earthquake, but all is prayer, praise and thanksgiving; showing that the application of the Seals is to be looked for where such a state of things should be found, namely, in the Church.

The trumpets have their prelude also, which is embraced in the second to the fifth verses inclusive, of the eighth chapter, and it implies that the prayers of the righteous, oppressed and afflicted by the ungodly rulers of this world, had ascended to God, and that the answer of his incensed justice had come down upon their enemies in mingled, confused voices, and thunderings, and lightnings and earthquakes. This answer gives the character of those events in which the

trumpets have their fulfilment. They are *political*, and announced the judgments of God in the overthrow and confusion of the powers that war against his righteous government.

We have seen how closely the seals adhered to the Church, from the first to the last of their wonderful developments.

The trumpets pursue quite a different course; they have no connection with ecclesiastical matters; they unfold, as far as they go, the great *political* drama of the world's history.

The trumpet was the military instrument, used by the Romans in the government, or direction of their armies. At one particular announcement of the trumpet, the armed multitude moved off with perfect order in the line of march. At another blast of the same instrument the encampment was formed with dispatch and precision, and with the convenience and order of a compact city; and at another sound, this whole encampment was immediately broken up, and the army was thrown into order of battle either for assault or defence.

The trumpet, then, is a most appropriate instrument to proclaim the stirring incidents of earth's history; and it is employed in the Apocalypse to announce to man the revolutions of governments, the crash of kingdoms, the convulsion of empires, and the end of the world.

2. *And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.*

3. *And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.*

4. *And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.*

5. *And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the*

altar, and cast it into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

6. *And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.*

7. *The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.*

8. *And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;*

9. *And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.*

10. *And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;*

11. *And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.*

12. *And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.*

13. *And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Wo, wo, wo, to the inhabiters of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpets of the three angels which are yet to sound!*

THE FIRST TRUMPET.

The first trumpet announces the downfall of the Roman empire, in the language of the 7th verse:—*The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire, mingled with blood,*

and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

The Roman empire was the most stupendous monument of human power ever known to the world. Its boundless extent, comprehending a great multitude and variety of nations; its wonderful capabilities of government, adapted to such vast extent, and the mixed multitude of people and tongues comprised within its dominion,—present it to our contemplation as an object of wonder and grandeur.

The description of this empire, as given by Daniel the prophet, is at once graphic and thrilling; his language is: *After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly, and it had great iron teeth; it devoured, and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it; and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had ten horns.*

This was pagan Rome. She was known over all the earth as a ferocious persecutor, not only of the Christians, but likewise of the Jews, the ancient people of God.

The terrible form of this empire had darkened the page of Jewish prophecy, and its desolating march had wasted the land, and overthrown the cities of Judea, until the prophecy of Daniel was fulfilled, when the *abomination that maketh desolate* stood upon the ruins of the holy city.

But the end of this empire had now come. The first trumpet proclaims it; and this vast fabric of human dominion, as if struck with the lightnings of heaven's avenging wrath, fell; and its fall, amidst storms of hail, and fire, and blood, shook the earth, and covered the whole civilised world with its ruins.

The history of that event is impressed upon the knowledge of the world even from the schoolbook, up to the loftiest genius of historic record; and a repetition of it here would probably prove more tedious than interesting.

Men have speculated upon the causes of the overthrow of this mightiest of all earthly monarchies; age after age the

questions, Who did it ? and, How was it done ? have been asked and answered a thousand times ; but at last the only true answer to these questions is,—*God did it !* and he employed just such means as were best calculated to meet the deserts of a power distinguished for its fierce, cruel, and barbarous persecution of his people.

The power by which Rome was overthrown was barbarian ! This the prophet foretells with almost a literal precision ; he says, *Hail and fire, mingled with blood, were cast upon the earth, and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.* A savage species of warfare is implied by this figure. The power, numbers, and rapidity of movement, are likened to a storm of hail ; and fire mingled with blood represents the unsparing cruelty that marked the course of the barbarian, alike reckless of the blood of the best citizens, the most tender and delicate ties of humanity, and the noblest works of art. Whatever was virtuous and elevated in society, useful or beautiful in art, or instructive in science, emblemised by *trees* and *green grass*, all were swept away in the wild torrent of barbarian conquest.

Mr. Croly has drawn from that eventful history the most vivid and impressive picture that I have met with ; and from his work I will here add a few brief extracts :—

" The fall of the western empire was wrought by an agency, " whose existence no European mind could have conceived, " which was altogether unexcited by Europe, and which con- " tinued to act steadily and resistlessly until its whole tre- " mendous work was done. A fugitive slave at the eastern " extremity of Asia had collected a band of robbers ; from a " band they swelled into a tribe ; the tribe became rapidly " the head of tribes. At length the final impulse was given. " As by the sound of a trumpet the whole northern world, " from the wall of China, was in motion towards the west. " Nation rolled on nation, each as it reached Europe filling " up the intrenchments of the Roman empire, each bringing

" with it a new power of desolation, and all rushing down on " one devoted centre, Rome.

" A.D. 408. The German armies had scarcely satiated " themselves with conquest, when Italy was startled by a " new invasion. Alaric had again advanced, trampled down " all opposition, and pushed his cavalry to the gates of the " capital. The city was helpless, and the conqueror conde- " scended to be bought off with the gold of the nobles. For " the first time since Hannibal, a period of six hundred and " nineteen years, the imperial city had now felt the insult of " an enemy's presence. But a deeper disgrace was still to " be borne : within two years the Gothic army again ad- " vanced to the walls ; and while the senate was feebly la- " boring to deprecate the wrath of Alaric, the gates were " thrown open. The shouts of the barbarians at midnight " roused the city from its sleep. The whole furious multi- " tude poured in, and the indescribable excesses of savage " cruelty, avarice, and licentiousness, raged through Rome.

* * * * * *

" A.D. 430. There was now but one untouched fragment " of the dominion of the Cæsars, the vast tract of Africa that " borders the Mediterranean ; a land in whose proverbial so- " litude we can trace no image of the granary of Italy, co- " vered with superb architecture, fertile fields, and an opu- " lent and civilised population.

" Genseric crossed the sea at the head of the Vandal army. " The seven provinces from Tangier to Tripoli, were instantly " in flames. The mountain tribes joined the invaders. The " Roman settlers found themselves surrounded at once by " native and foreign hostility. During nine years the war " raged with unutterable desolation, until Carthage was " taken, and Genseric was monarch of northern Africa. The " war in Europe had gradually subsided, but the time of ten- " fold tempest was come. The northern invaders had them- " selves been fugitives, chafed and kindled into conquerors " only by the collision with Rome. But the conqueror of

" the conquerors was now on his way—Attila, the Calmuck. " Others had been the kings of barbarians, Attila was the " king of barbarism! He alone amongst the conquerors of " ancient and modern times, united the two mighty kingdoms " of Germany and Scythia. His actual dominion touched at " once the Rhine, the Baltic, and the Volga. The boundless " regions of the north of Asia were filled with his tributaries. " Nations, with their hereditary sovereigns at their head, " fought under his banners. A crowd of monarchs, and lead- " ers of famous tribes, served round his person as guards and " attendants; and when he moved to battle, his army, " which might be more justly called a column of that count- " less army which was waiting his command in the desert, " the advance guard of the northern world, amounted to half " a million of men.

" A.D. 441. The Tartar multitude had long unconsciously " been drawn within that influence which urged all nations, " the near and the more remote alike, on the Roman empire.

" Its first movements had been dubious and desultory. It " had bent to the south, and spread over a part of Persia. " But the flow of the great living morass, once loosened from " its bed, soon followed a broader and more fatal road. The " whole line of Europe, from the Black Sea to the Gulf of " Venice, was assaulted; a frontier of five hundred miles was " covered with fire and slaughter. The old arts and defences " of war were idle before the inexhaustible numbers and wild " fury of the Huns. The fortified cities were instantly re- " duced to ashes; the troops of Constantinople were trodden " down without stopping the march; two battles hunted " them into the Thracian Chersonesus, and a third left the " emperor without a soldier in the field. The cavalry of the " Huns now swept the whole splendid territory from the Pro- " pontis to Thermopylæ; seventy cities of the eastern empire " were sacked; and Rome awaited in terror and weakness the " summons of a conqueror, who seemed armed with powers " more than of human.

" From the shores of Africa, Genseric, the *Vandal,* saw " the spoil about to fall into the hands of all nations, and he " determined to have the lion's share. He secretly equipped " a fleet, embarked an army, eluded or despised the feeble " opposition of the imperial officers, and before Rome " dreamed of his approach, was master of the Tiber. The " intelligence roused the city into universal uproar. All " was confusion and helpless rage among the people. In the " palace all was terror. Without troops on which he could " depend, and in the midst of impotent or traitorous council- " lors, the Emperor Maximus had no resource but in flight. " Even that base refuge was denied to him ; he was met by " the populace, dragged from his horse, and stoned to death. " Genseric moved slowly on, leaving anarchy to do its work. " But on the 15th of June, as the day dawned, Rome saw, " with the horrors of instant assault, all her avenues thronged " with the dusky visages and strange banners of Numidia. " The Roman eagle had long been despoiled of the thunder- " bolt, but it was now stripped of every plume. * *

" In the invasion of Genseric, Rome, still the head of a " great though distracted empire, containing incalculable " wealth, and with a population of millions, could not com- " mand the services of a single soldier. The multitudes who " might have crushed the invaders by their mere weight, " could find neither leaders, nor spirit to follow if they had " found them. In place of that torrent of more than fire— " that stream of heroic steel, and indignant patriot courage, " which would have burst from the gates of ancient Rome, " the city of cities could send but a procession of aged eccle- " siastics to deprecate the wrath of the conqueror.

" This last resource partially succeeded. The purpose of " the Vandal was plunder, not massacre ; and Genseric " stooped to make a treaty with the Bishop of Rome. * * * " But how much of the stipulations of this treaty must have " been forgotten, will appear in the scene that followed.

" The African army, already furious at the temporary re-

" straint, like a wild beast roaring for its prey, at length " broke through the gates ; the Vandal, the Moor, the Ne- " gro, the Savage of the Atlas, were all let loose together, " and from the palace to the hut, Rome was filled with ra- " pine, violation, and carnage.

" Genseric sailed for Carthage, with fruits of triumph un- " rivalled, an empress and her daughters, the last survivors " of the line of the great Theodosius, thousands of the no- " blest youths and maidens, captives, and a spoil of all that " was *venerable*, *lovely*, or *magnificent* in the imperial opulence " of Rome. Among those were the ornaments of the Capi- " tol, the sacred vessels of the churches, and, more precious " still, from their splendor and their history, the plunder of " the temple of Jerusalem—the cups of gold, the golden ta- " ble, and the seven-branched golden candlestick, the myste- " rious emblem of the holiest of all things. Four hundred " years after Titus, those matchless relics of the most singu- " lar and most unfortunate people of the earth, were carried " from the Roman temple of peace, to be the sport of savages " in the sands of Africa.

" This was the death-blow. The rest was the quarrel of " vulgar faction, in which the alternate victors fell without " use and without honor. At length, for the final degrada- " tion, a boy, the son of Orestes, a Parmanian, and subject " of Attila, was placed on the throne ! * * *

" A.D. 476. Odoacer, a bold barbarian, at the head of " an army, commanded him to retire from the insulted throne. " Augustulus submissively resigned. The senate formally de- " clared the seat of sovereignty to be removed to Constanti- " nople, and the Empire of the West was no more."

I have but one reflection to add on the great event of the first trumpet, and then I shall dismiss it, and pass to the second trumpet.

That an empire of such vast military powers and resources —such lofty pride and unequalled grandeur, should have been

dragged down to the earth, and trampled upon by rude and uncivilized barbarians; is a lesson to the rulers of this world, which should never be forgotten or disregarded. It is the teaching of Divine Providence, from which we learn that he who has instituted government amongst men for the best and wisest ends, will not suffer man, by the abuse of government, to defeat the designs of the wise and gracious appointment of God.

"The powers that be, are ordained of God," as part of his great plan for the elevation and improvement of man's whole nature, moral, intellectual and physical; and wherever a government, no matter what its character or form may be, prostitutes its powers so as to defeat this end, it excludes God from its operations and assumes to be independent of his authority; such a government inevitably comes sooner or later to a disastrous overthrow.

We now turn from the downfall of this mighty empire, to contemplate the rise of another, but little inferior to it in extent or in the progress and triumph of its arms.

THE SECOND TRUMPET.

8. *And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea; and the third part of the sea became blood.*

9. *And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.*

The events of this trumpet follow in regular order of time the overthrow of the Roman empire.

This second trumpet unfolds a picture of the most extensive and terrific grandeur; the symbol is one of awful sublimity.

A mountain towering to the clouds in its wild and rugged form, is suddenly enveloped in sheets of fire!

For a time it reels and throws itself from side to side, till at length, tearing itself from its deep foundation, it rolls away amongst the affrighted nations of the earth.

After having burnt and changed the whole face of Arabia, its native land, it rolled into Persia : the soft and effeminate land of Chosroes is speedily reduced to ashes. Syria is the next to feel its consuming fires. Her splendid cities and her sacred temples fall before it ; and now Egypt is crushed under its fiery tread, the cities and the monuments of the Pharaohs are overthrown and left a mass of smoking ruins. The wilderness of Africa, watered by the Atlantic, is fired and destroyed by the mountain roll ; and at the Pillars of Hercules, it bounds over the waters which divide the two continents, and throws itself upon Europe. Spain is destroyed. France feels the presence of the fires, but is not consumed ; Italy smokes from the intense heat of the mountain, but she escapes its fires.

On the East of Europe, the mountain roll was checked, and its fires began to subside before the walls of Byzantium.

This mountain is represented by the prophet only in a burning state, and while in that state, as falling into the sea. But as we are to look to history for the explanation of the figure we should take it in all its parts, and pursue the mountain in its extensive and devious course. It will be found that about a century was absorbed in its fall and before its fires were extinguished.

This Mountain represents the rise, the character, and the conquests of the Saracen Empire ! Mountains are the common metaphors employed to express extensive religious government : a few examples will illustrate this. *The mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills.* Isa. xi. 2. The meaning of which is that the religion of Christ shall rise superior to all other systems of religion and be established over them.

Daniel, in explaining the king's dream (chap. xi. 34, 35.)

says, "Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without " hands, which smote the image upon his feet, that were of " iron and clay, and broke them to pieces, and the stone " that smote the image became a great *mountain* and filled " the whole earth."

This stone is well understood to be the Christian religion; " cut out without hands." It did not owe its origin to the wisdom or contrivance of man: but it smote and broke to pieces the great image; that is, the pagan Roman empire; and continued to increase and spread its light and influence until it filled the whole earth,—became the universal religion.

Other passages of a similar character might be adduced, but these will suffice to fix the import of the mountain now under our view. It is an extensive religious power, or government, not the Christian religion of course. The peculiarity of this mountain is, that *it is burning with fire!* Covered with flame! This expresses the character of the religion embodied in the mountain: it was propagated by the *sword!* It was an empire based upon a religious faith or doctrine;— " God is one and Mahomet is his prophet," that was the mountain, and the fire that covered and blazed all over it, was the wars by which so large a portion of the world was conquered and brought under its dominion. War was its chief employment, it lived in and was covered by this fire!

The koran or tribute, were the conditions it imposed upon the kingdoms of the earth, and the alternative to these was the sword!

Without any purpose of giving a history of Mohammedanism, I shall now very briefly allude to the course of this Saracenic empire, from its rise until its fall into the sea; to show that its proper place is under the second trumpet.

Mahomet, or Mohammed, as some say is his proper name—but he is as well known by one as the other—was the founder of this vast empire. His genius was the spark that fired the mountain, and his fanaticism imparted to it the faith and the

ardor which conquered every obstacle, and spread his religion and his dominion over Africa, Europe and Asia.

Mohammed was born in idolatry. His nation were worshippers of the heavenly bodies. But by means of commerce then carried on by caravans, he came to a knowledge of the ignorance of the priests, and the absurdity and superstition of their religion.

Mecca, his native city, was a great mart where merchants assembled from various parts of the world to sell and buy and exchange the various commodities of different nations. Jews and Christians there met with traders from different heathen lands, and religion, as well as trade, would sometimes afford a topic of conversation.

Mohammed imbibed new impressions from the discussions he heard on this subject, and by a free intercourse with Jews and Christians, he received his first convictions of the Being and attributes of God. His mind became awakened and his inquiries led him to further discoveries. He soon became convinced that the koreish, or priests, of his country were ignorant teachers, and that the *Caaba* or sacred temple of Mecca was not deserving of the profound reverence with which his nation regarded it. He ventured to express his new views on the subject of Religion. His boldness was rebuked by the priests, and such was the indignation with which they heard his startling innovations upon the ancient and venerable religion of their country, that violent measures were threatened if he did not desist from such unhallowed liberties.

The zeal of the reformer, for he richly deserves the name, was only increased by the denunciations of the koreish, and he was compelled at length to make his flight from Mecca to Medina. Here he communicated his new impressions to a few whom he supposed to be capable of appreciating his sincerity. These readily embraced his opinions of the true God and protested their readiness to live or die with him in their defence. The promise of wealth and distinction, as the re-

sult of their conquests, and of paradise as the sure reward of all who fell in battle, rapidly gathered votaries to the prophet's standard.

Mohammed soon found himself in a situation to set about reforming his own country, and in *ten years* of preaching and battle, he succeeded in overthrowing the ancient idolatry of Arabia and establishing Mahometanism upon its ruins, A. D. 620. This was the period when the mountain threw itself from side to side upon its natural foundations.

The historian* says of this unequalled achievement: "A "revolution was thus effected in an obscure corner of the "world which shortly after subverted or shook the most "powerful monarchies, and extended its effects to the distant "regions of Asia, Africa, and Europe."

Restless ambition, stimulated by fanatical zeal, left no bounds to the field of Mahometan reformation. *Idolatry* was the special object of its vengeance, but conquest so mingled itself with its religion that wherever there was a throne there was an object to be assailed.

Persia was the first foreign nation that felt the Saracenic blow. The worshippers of the sun and of fire struggled for their temples and altars, but the burning mountain consumed them, and the descendants of the great Chosroes bowed their necks and their faith to the yoke of Mohammed.

Syria next fell under the arms of the Saracens. Mohammed had resigned his life and left his rising empire to those who were duly appointed to uphold the fame and spread the religion of the prophet. Under the irresistible prowess of the lieutenants of the caliphs, the war was prosecuted with untiring vigor. The wealthy cities of Damascus, and Antioch, and Ephesus, with many others, successively fell into their hands. They finally directed the tide of conquest against Jerusalem. In vain did the venerable patriarch urge the sacredness of the *City of God*, and reprove the

* Gibbon.

temerity of the Arabs for attempting to pollute its sanctity. The appeal was answered by a furious rush upon the city: a desperate struggle ensued, but the mountain roll could not be stayed. Jerusalem fell under its crushing weight and the site of its ancient temple became the foundation of a mosque.

To mitigate to some extent the grief of the patriarch and to express the lingering veneration for the city of God, which had been impressed upon the feelings of those people of the desert from their habits of intercourse with the Jews and the historic light of the Koran, the request by the patriarch that the city might not be surrendered into hands inferior to the Caliph himself, was granted; and Omar, the successor and representative of Mohammed, ascended from Medina to Jerusalem:—not in the pomp and state of royalty, but in the simple style of a pilgrim.

Borne on the back of his camel, with a scanty supply of the simplest fare for the journey, he proceeded to Jerusalem, occupying himself as he journeyed in preaching to the people, and explaining the new religion. Omar received the submission of the city, and saluted the patriarch with cordiality and kindness, walked and conversed with him freely upon the subject of the Jews and their religion, and professed the profoundest respect for the great city, inferior only, in his estimation, to Mecca and Medina.

This hostile meeting in Jerusalem of Jews and Arabians, recalls to our minds the memorable meeting of Jacob and Esau, at the brook Jabbok. Here is Esau, the man of the desert, in the person of the Caliph, with his innumerable bands of armed men. And here is Jacob, with his numerous family, surrounded with wealth and prosperity, agitated with fear, being in the power of his brother, and offering his treasures to appease his anger. But as it was in the meeting at the brook, so it was at this. When the Caliph discerned in these Jews the lineaments of a common ancestry, his stern nature was touched with a fraternal sympathy, as the thought

rushed upon his mind,—they are my brethren ! No violence was offered to the city or its inhabitants by the Caliph ; Jews and Christians were allowed to continue their religious services in their own temples, and the mosques of Moslemism rose up in the midst of them. The remaining cities of Syria submitted to the victorious arms of the Caliph, and the whole province became the trophy of Moslemism. The conquest of Jerusalem completed the subjugation of Syria, and gave that land of miracles to the dominion of Moslemism.

The arms of the Caliph were next directed to Egypt. The magnificence of the cities of the Pharaohs, the rich productions of art, and the unbounded wealth of the country, presented a prize well calculated to stimulate the enthusiasm, and fire the ardor of the Arabs. Amrow plunged into this kingdom with an army of such inferior force, that had it been any other people than those wild tenants of the desert, it would have been deemed a most reckless and inexcusable sacrifice of his army. But he knew his men, every one of whom delighted in perils, and courted danger with an ardent desire to encounter it. Their religious enthusiasm and heroic bravery surmounted every obstacle. As everywhere else resistance was vain, the mountain of fire burnt up the defences of every land into which it rolled.

Alexandria, then the greatest commercial emporium of the world, embellished with the finest works of art, and filled with the wealth of her merchants, was besieged. The utmost efforts of human skill and human courage were displayed in its defence, but all in vain. "The standard of Mohammed "was planted on the walls of the capitol of Egypt."

Amrow, the commander of this expedition, announcing his success to the Caliph, says—"I have taken the great city of "the west. It is impossible for me to enumerate the variety "of its riches and beauty, and I shall content myself with ob-"serving, that it contains *four thousand palaces*, four thousand "baths, *four hundred theatres*, &c., &c." With the conquest

of this luxurious capital of Egypt, the land of the Pharaohs became a portion of the Mohammedan empire.

Towards Europe the Saracens now directed their march. The country lying between the Nile and the Atlantic was passed, and every opposition to the progress of the conquerors was scattered like chaff before the wind, until they came within view of the Atlantic. The courageous Ackbah spurred his horse into the waves, and raising his eyes to heaven, exclaimed : "Great God ! if my course was not stopped by "this sea, I would still go on to the unknown kingdoms of "the west, preaching the verity of thy holy name, and put-"ting to the sword the rebellious nations who worship any "other gods than thee." This was a striking illustration of the fire that covered the mountain—the ardor and fanaticism of the Moslem religion.

The victorious progress of Ackbah, the leader of the Moslem forces at this time, was not to be stopped even by such a barrier as the Atlantic interposed.

Following the coast until he came to the Pillars of Hercules, he threw his army across the Straits of Gibraltar into Europe. Spain was assailed with a fury, which for a while amazed and confounded her ; but she recovered herself, and her energies rose in proportion to the dismay which was produced by the first shock of the assailants. A fierce and bloody contest was maintained on both sides, but finally Spain was forced to yield, and she was added to the trophies of the Mohammedan conquest.

France, warned by what she saw, and dreading a similar catastrophe, lost no time in placing herself in the best possible attitude for defence. Fortunately for her, Charles Martel guided her fortunes at that eventful epoch. His genius and his courage were equal to the emergency, and his troops were animated with an enthusiastic military ardor, the presage of the future destiny of that nation. Martel met the conquering Arabs, and checked their progress. France was safe, and the tide of Moslem might was thrown upon *Italy !*

Rome, groaning and bleeding under the wounds she had received from her barbarian conquerors, was in no condition to meet her new adversary. She saw from her walls with fear and despondency the approach of the foe. She called for aid, and was fortunate in obtaining help ; how effectual it would have proven is not known, as the battle in which they engaged the Saracens at the mouth of the Tiber, was terminated by a violent storm of wind, which scattered the fleet of the invader, and proved destructive to most of his ships. Thus was Rome relieved from the presence of a foe, whose appearance must have reminded her of the Goths and Vandals, her former conquerors.

On the eastern side of Europe, and for several years previous to their appearance on the western shores of that continent, the Arabs made two attempts at different periods upon the city of Constantinople.

The western empire of Rome, as we have already seen, had sunk under the tremendous blows of her barbarian conquerors, but the east was reserved for its appropriate foe, and for the appointed time of its end.

Before the city of Byzantium the banners of the prophet were unfurled, " and eighteen hundred galleys, conveying the " Saracen forces, crowded the Bosphorus."

The struggle was a desperate one, but the Saracens met here a foe clothed in *actual fire!* which they had no skill to counteract. The Greek fire-ships discharged their blazing streams amongst the crowded ships of the assailants. It spread rapidly through the fleet, until the Bosphorus resembled a frightful volcano vomiting flames and lava. The conquerors of Persia, Syria, and Africa, were discomfited here, and the courageous Moslemah who conducted the expedition abandoned his vain attempt, and retired with the remnant of his shattered ships and reduced army to try his prowess on other fields of European conflict. The charm of Saracen invincibility was broken before the walls of Byzantium, and the fire of the burning mountain now began to subside

Reverses produced revolts amongst the Moslem powers, and this vast empire was everywhere separating and falling to pieces, until finally "the power, the wealth, the magnifi-"cence and the learning of the Arabians *totally disappeared.* "No nation ever rose so rapidly to eminence, and none ever "sunk more completely into its primitive obscurity."*

I have sketched this general outline of the rise and progress of the Saracen Empire from the history which Gibbon gives of that most wonderful people. The purpose of this outline is to show the perfect adaptation of the figure. *A great mountain* burning with fire is represented as plunging into the sea. Its fires are suddenly extinguished, and the mountain itself totally disappears !

The religious and moral effects of the Saracen power while it did continue, and since its fall under the Turkish Empire upholding the same religion, is now given by the prophet. The mountain being cast into the sea has another meaning as well as that which signifies its total disappearance under the Caliphs : it implies the vast extent of its religion. The sea is intended, under this view of the text, to express multitudes of people. It was said to the prophet in another vision, *The waters which thou sawest where the whore sitteth are peoples and multitudes, and nations and tongues!*—Chap. 17.

This Saracen Empire is represented, under this second idea of the *sea*, as spreading its religion amongst many nations. The moral effects which followed the spread of this empire are figuratively conveyed in these words : *And the third part of the sea became blood, and the third part of the creatures which were in the sea and had life died, and the third part of the ships were destroyed.* This is all metaphorical ! Things not real are spoken of, to express things which really did occur.

The idea that this referred to a visitation of Providence upon some *maritime nation*, because the destruction of *ships* is

* Gibbon.

spoken of, or that it alludes to the discomfiture of the Spanish Armada, is altogether inadmissible, upon the principle that these prophecies do not admit of literal interpretation, except when they speak of things that cannot be metaphorically represented.

The third part of the sea became blood, is an allusion to the waters in Egypt, which were turned to blood at the time of the memorable controversy between Moses and Aaron, the ambassadors of God, and the haughty Pharaoh. The qualities of those waters were entirely changed, so that they no longer answered the purpose of a refreshing and cleansing element. That was a reality ; but the figure employed in the text exhibits an effect no less embarrassing and annoying, though of a very different nature.

Wherever the Saracen power became established, the institutions of the people, political and religious, were either entirely subverted, or oppressed with such exactions and changes, according to the caprice of the conquerors, that they were no longer productive of the advantages which the people had formerly enjoyed from them. Their principles or qualities were totally changed, and became useless and morally disgusting, as the waters of the Nile did to the Egyptians. The *koran*, or *tribute*, were the conditions to which the conquered nations were subjected, and these were as vexatious and annoying as the turning the waters to blood was to Egypt.

The idea of the miraculous change of these waters of Egypt is still kept up there. The *fish* died in consequence of the change of the waters ; and it is said of the sea into which the burning mountain was cast that the third part of it became blood, and the third of the creatures that were therein *and had life, died!* Some of the creatures that were in this sea are distinguished by the peculiarity of having life from others not having life : a very strong fact in support of this explanation of the text. The creatures that had life and died, can mean nothing else than those governments that

were based upon principles of truth and justice, whose laws aimed at the amelioration and improvement of the social condition of men ; and the figure also embraces the religious institutions of the countries subjugated by the Mohammedans. These were overthrown or so rigorously oppressed, that in many instances the people discarded the Christian religion and embraced Mohammedanism : they renounced the Bible and received the Koran. These are the creatures that had life, and only these could die. The text necessarily implies that there were creatures that had no life, and were not liable to death. We readily comprehend the allusion of the prophet to be to those nations whose institutions were barbarous. Their governments were no more oppressive or despotic under the dominion of the Saracen and the religion of the Koran than they had been before their conquest. They lost nothing by the change ; they merely passed from under the arbitrary and despotic rule of their *own* kings to the dominion of a foreign yoke of the same character. The great extent of the Mohammedan Empire embraced multitudes and nations of this description. It would not meet the comprehensive scope of the prophecy if we were to limit the application of the text to the days of the Saracen Empire. In order to do ample justice to the meaning of the prophet, we must follow the Mohammedan power after the sceptre passed from the hands of the Caliphs and was seized by the Turks. It was the same power in every respect, continued under a different name and form ; and the history of Turkish barbarism in Europe alone, will give ample proof that the creatures that inhabited the vast sea over which it held dominion died under its galling tyranny. Christian Europe was struck with dread when this brutal and fanatical power, with the Koran in one hand and the cimeter in the other, presented itself upon her eastern border, fierce and dark, like the storm-clouds as they spread over the sky, and threaten to desolate the earth with floods and tempests.

The scenes of Missolonghi and other portions of Greece,

when her sons nobly struggled to throw off the Turkish yoke, stand out upon the record of history with a dreadful prominency as they point to the horrors of Turkish rapine and barbarity, and show where the Christian religion died under the fatal cimeter, and Mohammedanism usurped its place. These were striking instances of the dying of the creatures that had life in the great sea of human society that was turned to blood by the burning mountain being cast into it. No one can suppose that *idolatry* was amongst the creatures that died in this sea ; *it* must rank amongst the creatures that have *no* life, and therefore were not capable of dying.

The last effect of the mountain being cast into the sea is the destruction of *ships* which followed it.

I have already objected to the opinion that this refers to actual ships, engaged either in war or in commerce. The Spanish Armada is supposed by some to illustrate it ; but this has the fatal error of making one part of the subject real, or literal, while the rest is received figuratively. It is safest to preserve a harmony throughout in the explanation of these prophecies.

The Spanish Armada was, it is true, a combination of fearful elements of destruction, and was destined to be thrown like a great bombshell upon England, where it should explode and destroy protestantism ! The hand of a protecting Providence was conspicuous in scattering the power of this Spanish engine ; not by the burning mountain, however ; this was not the instrument of its defeat. I think a more consistent solution of the prophet's meaning will be found in the following views :

Ships are the means by which commerce is carried on between nations separated by seas. By these their wealth is acquired or augmented. We must look, then, for the explanation of this part of the text to something which serves the purpose of ships, and is in use amongst people and countries not separated by oceans, but by vast deserts, lofty mountains, or solitary plains. Commerce, amongst nations so

situated, was, from time almost immemorial, carried on by the camel and other beasts of burthen adapted to the desert or the mountain travel. By means of these patient, laborious, and docile creatures, the productions of one country were transported to another, and the interchange of commodities of luxury and necessity was thus kept up.

Who can ever forget the history of Joseph, Jacob's favored son, who, by the cruel jealousy of his brethren, was sold to one of these trading caravans and carried down into Egypt, and there, in his youth, torn from the embrace of a doating father, and amongst a people whom he had never seen or heard of—a people wholly ignorant of the God whose name and worship were consecrated in the house of his father—amongst these strangers and idolaters Joseph was sold? But the religious instruction of the venerable old Jacob clung to his darling son in the loneliness and sorrow of his exile, and we behold the youth, firm in his fidelity to his religion, rising in the court of Pharaoh to honor, dignity, and glory, second only to the king upon the throne.

This short digression will be excused. My thoughts cannot range within view of the times of the Pharaohs without pausing to yield a spontaneous homage to the virtuous, the noble and the generous principles which illustrate the character and perpetuate the fame of Joseph.

These caravans performed the same service in passing from one country to another over the trackless deserts that are performed by the ships upon the ocean, and by them different and distant nations kept up a regular business and traffic.

Although these caravans made their periodical journeys to Mecca and Medina without experiencing violence from the Arabs, it is nevertheless a fact that, after the Mohammedan revolution in that country, the armies of the several caliphs frequently captured them, and plundered them of their costly freights. They were intercepted in every direction, and so constantly harassed that the trade was interrupted, and finally disappeared. This license to plunder the caravans

arose out of the principle, that whoever were not Mohammedans were the enemies of Mohammed, and their property a fair subject of confiscation !

A term of limitation is used by the prophet in describing the effects produced by the mountain falling into the sea. The limitation restricts those effects to *one-third:* The third part of the sea became blood, and the third part of the creatures that were in the sea and had life died, and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

Dr. Adam Clarke, upon the text, says, that this is a Rabbinical phrase, and was employed, not in a restricted sense, but as a general term signifying a considerable part or portion of time or substance. It is synonymous with the term well understood by men in the present day when they speak of a portion or part of a thing : they mean less than the whole, without describing in precise terms how much of the thing they do mean. One-third is a certain number used to express an uncertain number. The prophet means to inform us that these effects were not produced all over the vast conquests made by the Saracens. The sea became blood only in those parts, where a higher order of civilization and government was suppressed by the introduction of their despotism, and that the creatures in this sea died only where Christianity was overthrown and supplanted by Mahommedanism, which certainly was not the case in those countries, where there was no Christianity. And, in conclusion, he informs us that the power represented by the burning mountain seriously interrupted, and in some instances entirely subverted, the trade and commerce which had for ages subsisted amongst the nations of the earth by means of these caravans.

The dignity and importance of these Apocalyptic visions, forbid the idea that they would call the attention of men to any subject that was not in some way or other connected with the great interests of mankind. And the question will naturally be asked, what interest of this world was affected by the rise of the Mohammedan power ?

Since the Flood the world has had but one course, and that has invariably been onward! The tendency of the moral government of God over this world must necessarily tend to *perfection.* The imperfect views of men, as to whether this or that act of Providence is calculated to lead towards this perfection, does not clash with this general principle; for the world by its wisdom, in its highest intellectual attainments, cannot know God! And that which appears to us as a great social or political evil, is often produced by the necessity which is imposed upon the providence of God to counteract and overthrow the works of men: even though they might at one time, and under other circumstances, have subserved the purposes of his wise designs; yet, by the great changes which the world has passed through, these social and political systems may have become not only useless, but now tend to retard the great object of ultimate perfection.

The mind of Mohammed, by coming in contact with the more enlightened minds of the caravan traders, was gradually led to the belief in the existence of a God. His convictions grew into faith, and his faith he boldly asserted; and the result was the overthrow of Paganism in Arabia and Persia. Although his system of religion is false and delusive in every thing save in the recognition of the true God, it is entitled to the credit of giving this great truth to millions who did not possess it before—who lived and groped in the night of Pagan darkness. Thus far at least the minds of men were opened, and a light was let in upon them that had not shone there before. Who can tell what would have been the condition of all that part of the earth now covered by the Mohammedan religion, if the dark night of Pagan idolatry had not been lighted by this star? Limited and imperfect as its light is, it shines in the Mohammedan sky to direct the prayer of the devout Moslem to the only true God. There is nothing in all the sky of Paganism to do this: that heaven is without a solitary star—it is one universal gloom.

Mohammedanism abolished the horrid custom of sacrificing a virgin yearly to the imaginary god of the Nile, to secure the annual overflow of its waters! This sacrifice of a human being to the water god was prompted by the degraded and cruel superstition of Egyptian religion: that feature of their religion was changed.

The famous Alexandrian library also fell under the sweep of Mohammedan destruction! An act for which the memory of the mild, the beneficent, and the devout caliph, Omar, has been branded with every epithet of ignominy. But his answer to all who censure this act stands upon the record of history, in his reply to his lieutenant, Amrow, the conqueror of Egypt, who wished to be instructed as to the manner of disposing of this library. "If these books agree with the "Koran, they are not necessary; if they do not, they should "be destroyed;" was the brief dispatch which Amrow received from the caliph.

The subjugation of Jerusalem by the arms of the Saracens, was, it is more than probable, a providential appointment, although it was at the time in the hands of Christians. It would appear so from the 2d verse, chap. xi.—"But the "court which is without the temple leave out, and measure "it not, *for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city* "shall they tread under foot forty and two months." Jerusalem, which is the holy city referred to, the peculiar designation by which it was known amongst all nations, was conquered about the time that relics became a currency in the monkish trade with the people! The bones of saints were highly estimated, and pre-eminently so were those brought from the sepulchres of Jerusalem! Who can imagine the extent to which this preposterous and disgusting imposition would have been carried, if Jerusalem had continued in the free and unrestrained possession of these *Christians*? The whole land would have been eviscerated, and the bones of every charnel-house of Judea would have been scattered over Europe in this unholy traffic. Was it to check this delusion

that the holy city was *given* into the hands of these Saracen Gentiles? What other means were there that could so effectually restrain this loathsome method of gratifying monkish cupidity?

Although the Christians were indulged with the privilege of continuing their religious services, and the free use of their temples, no doubt the presence of the Moslem eye, and the unsuppressed scorn and derision with which he treated the low and vulgar superstition that imparted such efficacy to a mass of corrupt and decayed bones, must have checked very much the extravagancies of this religious traffic.

The pretended "*miraculous fire of Easter eve*," which the congregated mass of deluded pilgrims looked upon with silent awe, was indignantly scouted and scoffed at by the Arabs! The chafing ridicule and contemptuous scorn of the Moslems imposed a restraint upon the Christianity of Jerusalem which it was not disposed quietly to submit to. They found their relic trade interrupted, and their unrighteous gains diminished. This produced irritation, which finally broke out into angry broils, and converted the city into two hostile parties, the Christians and the Mohammedans. The latter having the mastery, the Christians were frequently treated with severity, as their religion always had been with contempt, by the Saracens. Reports of their sufferings were carried into Europe, and kings and people were pathetically and eloquently urged to arms, and to rescue the holy sepulchre from the hands of the infidels. This produced the famous crusades, by which the Catholic powers of Europe, after an incredible amount of suffering and waste of human life, finally succeeded in conquering the city. But their victory was temporary: the Turks reconquered it after the lapse of some years.

If the character of the works that comprised the Alexandria library could be ascertained, we should be better able to determine how far the censures against its destroyers are just or otherwise. If their religious merit consisted in a mere mass of heathenish superstition, or an accumulation of

the ancient and vulgar rites of Egyptian idolatry, or even the collection of a more refined though equally superstitious system of Grecian mythology, I should concur with the caliph in his decision that they ought to be destroyed. The preservation of the books, supposing them to have been of the character described, would have been a misfortune.

If such a collection of heterogeneous matter had been brought under the art of printing, which was discovered some centuries later, and had been spread over the world by the press, it would have interposed an insuperable obstacle in the way of the gospel, by mingling its subtle poison, in a thousand various forms, with the streams of Christianity. The human mind is tenacious of antiquated forms and systems. It is hard to tear it away from its idols consecrated by the lapse of ages. The gospel was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness, because it was not in conformity with the systems that had come down to them from the days of old.

If the mass of corrupt and godless trash which is poured from the press in the present age, perverting the principles and poisoning the minds of youthful readers, is considered so dangerous an evil even in the presence of so much Christian light and influence, what would have been the effect if these accumulated forms of ancient idolatry, ignorance, and superstition had been drawn from the Alexandria library, and thrown into form and shape by the art of printing? If this huge image of a corrupt and degraded religion had gone stalking over the earth at the time that Christianity began its renewed existence under the reformation, would it not have trodden down the tender plants of Christian growth, and, like the famous giant of Gath, insulted and defied the Christian's hope and effort? Omar defeated the existence of this religious monster, and slew him by anticipation, when he destroyed the Alexandria library.

We have now contemplated the rise and spread of the Saracen Empire under the second trumpet. The third trum-

pet calls us to view the downfall of a Christian empire by the hand of Mohammedanism.

THE THIRD TRUMPET.

FALL OF THE GRECIAN, OR EASTERN ROMAN, EMPIRE.

Stars are used under the seals, to denote religious institutions; as the seals are almost entirely devoted to ecclesiastical subjects.

But under the trumpets, which are confined to civil or political matters, all the symbols or metaphors employed by them must have reference to subjects of a corresponding character.

Therefore, while stars under the seals are employed to designate churches or religious associations, under the trumpets they express worldly kingdoms and political sovereignties.

10. *And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning, as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters.*

11. *And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood: and many men died of the waters because they were made bitter.*

The star announced under this trumpet is a kingdom, a political sovereignty. Its fall from heaven shows that its station was in Christendom. Its light, shining as a lamp that burneth, implies its pre-eminence over the nations around it, in arts, science, religion, and government.

Macaulay, in his late history of England, had occasion to speak of this kingdom; and it is remarkable that he employs the same designation as that used by the prophet almost two thousand years before. Macaulay speaks of it

as a "*lamp*, which by its light connects the past and the "future history of Europe."

This star is the Grecian Empire, or, as some style it, the Eastern Roman Empire. Its capital is the Roman Constantinople, or the Grecian Byzantium, holding its seat on the European side of the Propontis, and the images of its gorgeous temples and splendid palaces are reflected from the bosom of its waters.

This shining lamp shed its rays upon the neighboring nations, during the ages of their darkness.

The light of its laws, from the celebrated code of Justinian, continues to shine conspicuously in the systems of jurisprudence of the present enlightened age.

Enriched with the stores of Attic learning, and the maxims of Roman law and philosophy, and drawing to herself the genius and learning, which was sparely scattered amongst the darker nations, as to a common focus, she shone before the kingdoms of Europe "as a lamp that "burneth."

This Grecian Empire was decidedly the star of Europe. But the time of her end had now come, and the last throne of the Cæsars was prostrated by the power of the Turk, under Mohammed II., A.D. 1453.

The constantly swelling forces of the Scythians came rolling through the gorges of the mountains, and spreading themselves out upon the Thracian plain. Their approaches to a city that had checked the progress, and defeated the powers of the Saracen, were conducted with caution. A vast fortification was erected at a convenient distance, in order to protect their rear, or cover a retreat. The rocks were torn out of the mountains, and the forests were converted into huge timbers, for its hasty erection.

Constantinople trusted to her defences, and the valor of her people. Her massive walls, and lofty towers that looked over the vast plain to the west, were her safeguard on the land side ; besides these, a yawning chasm was cut in the

earth, far in advance of the walls, capable of engulfing a whole army. Then on her eastern side, the Bosphorus and the Propontis, with her fire-ships, and huge chains and booms swung across their channels, seemed to render her position invulnerable.

But she was now to be put upon a new trial of her skill and valor. The combination of charcoal, saltpetre, and sulphur, had introduced a new element in the shock of war; an element that dispensed with the old and cumbrous battering-ram in battering down walls and demolishing cities.

Mohammed did not possess the requisite skill for providing artillery of a suitable calibre, but his treasures procured that for him from Christian ingenuity; and a gun was cast at Adrianople by a Christian, to enable the Turks to conquer the most enlightened Christian city of Europe.

This gun was capable of throwing a stone ball of six hundred pounds weight; and on its first discharge, to test the strength of the metal, the country for twelve miles round was shaken, and the people thrown into consternation.

With incredible exertions this enormous gun was brought to its station. The Turkish forces were put in motion, and came like an avalanche, pushing before them the auxiliaries they had gathered up on their march, and driving them into the great ditch, for the purpose of filling it up! The Greeks were upon their walls, and poured upon the assailants every kind of missile they could command. Their liquid fire destroyed and consumed every thing before it. Mohammed could not spare men enough to fill the ditch, and he resorted to the use of horses, dead and alive; trees, and whatever came in his way, were pushed into the chasm that separated him from the walls of the city. But whatever he placed there through the day, the Greeks, in their desperate sallies of the night, either removed or consumed.

Huge wooden towers, placed upon wheels, were rolled up to the ditch, filled with Turks and scaling-ladders, in order to reach the walls; but the Greek fire sprung from the

walls, and speedily consumed them, together with the men that were in them.

Mohammed finding all his exertions counteracted, and his army wasting away under the heroic exertions of the Greeks, became furious with anger, and resolved to attack the city upon both sides. For this purpose he ordered a number of galleys to be transported across the land to the upper harbor. The mountain forest was flung down, and the trees riven into slabs, to construct a plank road ten miles in length, and the galleys were transported upon it by immense numbers of oxen, and launched upon the Bosphorus above the chains and booms, and out of reach of the fire-ships. In the mean time a breach had been made in the wall. To this point the opposing forces rushed ; here Greek and Turk, hand to hand, with cimeter and short sword, struggled in desperate conflict, and fell together in death. The assailants and the assailed rushed up and maintained the struggle over the dead bodies of their respective friends, until the breach became choked with the dead, and the combatants grappled each other upon the accumulated mass of dead bodies until it rose almost as high as the walls. Whilst this terrible struggle was going on at the breach, the Greeks were still bravely resisting the Turks from the remaining ramparts, until they discovered the enemy rounding a point of land above the city in their crowded galleys. Not expecting an attack by water, they had made no preparation of men to resist it. They were dismayed ; consternation took the place of courage, and they gave up all as lost. The deathly struggle was still kept up over the dead bodies at the breach, until the panic from the walls reached this point also, and then the rushing torrent of death was stayed. The Emperor was buried in the mass of the dead at the breach, where he fell bravely fighting for his crown and his religion ; and the last of the Cæsars fell, in the death of Paleologus Constantine.

The consternation of the inhabitants on finding themselves

captives to the Turks was expressed in groans, and shrieks, and wailings, which filled the air with dismal discord. Some rushed to the sea, to part with a life which it would be worse than death to preserve ; others flew to the churches, and uttered incoherent prayers in the wild scream of desperation ; whilst others, again, threw themselves at the feet of their conquerors, imploring their clemency ; and multitudes, to escape the horrors of Turkish captivity, renounced the Christian religion, and embraced Mohammedanism !

Scenes of the most shocking barbarity followed the overthrow of this ancient city of the Cæsars ; and the star which shone as a lamp that burneth, after a siege of nearly two months, fell, and was quenched in the bitter waters of Turkish oppression.

The conquest of Constantinople was followed by the destruction of the works of art and the treasures of science which adorned and enriched the city. This fountain of classic knowledge was changed into bitter waters by those barbarities for which the Turks have ever been proverbial.

The star was called Wormwood because of the bitter anguish which were the consequence of its fall.

The triumph of the Turks was complete, and extended to all the possessions of the Greeks. The figurative expressions of *fountains* and *rivers*, convey in a chaste and beautiful manner the idea of those intellectual pleasures and enjoyments which the classic taste of the Greeks combined with the philosophic research and learning of the Roman school, which was imparted to the civil and social departments of the empire.

But these fountains and rivers were totally changed, and bitter, or poisonous waters, as some translate the word, were substituted by the introduction of this new and cruel power into the country.

It is said in the 11th verse, that *a third part of the waters became wormwood, and many men died of the waters because they were made bitter.* The third part is used here to signify

that not all, but a considerable portion of this empire made an entire submission to, and embraced the Turkish religion. We are not to understand that men *actually* died ; a moral death is the idea intended. The meaning here is the same as that where it is said a third part of the creatures in the sea died, in consequence of the burning mountain being cast into the sea, and the water becoming blood. The scriptural explanation of spiritual or moral life and death is, when a man forsakes his sins and embraces religion, he is said to pass from death unto life ; and if he renounces the religion of Christ, and becomes the disciple of a false and delusive system of religion, he passes from life unto death. A third part of the waters became wormwood permanently, by acquiescing in the dominion of their new masters, and by an unresisting obedience to the authority of the Turks. But this was not the case with all the empire. The fire of Grecian patriotism and their enthusiastic love of liberty were not entirely quenched in these bitter waters. Extraordinary displays of heroic bravery have often been witnessed in the revolutionary struggles of the Greeks for the recovery of their liberty.

These, however, proved unavailing, until within the early part of the present century. The influence of a purer and milder Christianity produced by the Reformation, had softened the hearts of the Christian powers of Europe, and led some of these powers to interpose an effectual shield between the violence of the Turks and their suffering victims. England, France, and Russia, in 1826, entered into a treaty for the purpose of arresting the fury of Turkish barbarity, and if possible by persuasive measures to humanise the exercise of their power over the Greeks. But the stubborn despotism of the Sultan would listen to no proposals of that sort, until the memorable battle of Navarino, which was provoked by the sulky insolence of the Turkish admiral, in which he lost almost the whole of his powerful navy, and with it the means of continuing his revengeful policy.

After inflicting upon the Ottoman power this signal chas-

tisement, from which it has never recovered, the fostering protection of Christian powers gave to Greece its present kingdom; but in eastern Europe, the ancient seat of her glory and power, on the shores of the Bosphorus, still "continues to be the seat of Turkish barbarism and despotism." Thus, while a third part of the waters became wormwood permanently, other portions of these waters have been restored measurably to their former healthful and refreshing qualities, by being wrested from the oppression and cruelty of Turkish dominion.

THE FOURTH TRUMPET.

12. *And the fourth Angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.*

This trumpet announces an era of civil commotions in the nations or governments most distinguished for civil and political improvement.

The circumstances now brought into view are not of the character of those under the three preceding trumpets. Under these trumpets empires were overthrown—their civil institutions were changed, and other and different forms of government rose up out of their ruins. Under the fourth trumpet no star falls from heaven, but the light of the heavenly luminaries is partially eclipsed, and for a period of time their shining interrupted.

England and France were the nations alluded to under the sixth seal, for reasons fully assigned in treating of that seal.

Their political superiority in government and laws, and other great advantages which they enjoyed, social, religious, and civil, entitle them to this distinction under the trumpet.

The stars under this trumpet are inferior sovereignties, of limited extent and power. They will be found in the German sky, where multitudes of these small political lights have twinkled for centuries, with various degrees of brightness.

How these luminaries were smitten, and the cause of their diminished light, must be looked for in the history of these different countries; and the explanation of these political phenomena will appear in the 17th century.

The Prophet speaks of them all, the sun, moon, and stars, in such connexion, without any intervening subject or reference, that it is as if he had said, all these were smitten about the same time.

Excepting the stars, all that this fourth trumpet announces is contained in the events of the sixth seal. There is not much to be said about them here, as they are so fully described there.

Under the seal we had to distinguish between their *religious* and their *political* character, but in doing this their two-fold character was unavoidably exposed. Under that review of them, the seal claimed the religious features of those events as its rightful property; and now the trumpet claims its right of property in the political features of the same occurrences.

England is the sun referred to under this trumpet. The circumstance which smote this luminary, and diminished its shining for a short time, need only be alluded to.

Elizabeth possessed the affections of her subjects in an eminent degree. She left the throne of England, at her death, in a state of security, and the nation in great prosperity. Her government imparted to the people their rights, and the whole nation evinced a proud consciousness of superiority and pre-eminence. The crown was honored and obeyed at home, and was admired and respected abroad.

James I. succeeded Elizabeth. He was of a scornful and imperious temper, which involved him in great difficulties with his parliament.

The unfortunate Charles I. failed to sustain the policy and to carry out the measures of Elizabeth, but continued and increased the parliamentary quarrels which his father had commenced. The result was the rebellion, which overthrew the monarchy.

This feature of the English government was smitten, and a partial obscurity followed, from the political violence that continued to agitate the whole country. And the sun shone not for a third part, meaning for a considerable time. But, finally, these commotions settled down into quietness ; the monarchy was reinstated, and this sun, which had been partially darkened, shone out again in still greater splendor.

There is a marked peculiarity in *civil* wars, which does not appertain to wars that are foreign. It is this : a civil war breaks up the regular and harmonious action of the government ; the subjects throw off the authority, and defy the power of the monarch ; the laws are inoperative upon the rebellious, and the government, so far as its subjects have rebelled, is overthrown—is without authority. Not so in a foreign war. No matter how much a nation may be pressed by a foreign foe, upon its own subjects its laws are operative —its power and authority are unimpaired.

In both instances cited in the text, the reference is to monarchies in this state of rebellion—subjects fighting against their lawful sovereign ! A third part, or a portion of the people, smiting their own government, thereby causing its light to be diminished—which means, deranging its economy, and obstructing the legitimate exercise of its laws. This was the case in both England and France in the 17th century.

The prophet having fixed the sun and the moon as the symbols of these two kingdoms under the sixth seal, would be likely, in his future reference to them, to speak of them under the same figures ; so that it is not necessary to say more than has already been said to show that he refers, under this trumpet, to England and France.

The third part of the moon was smitten by precisely the same circumstances as those by which the sun was smitten. The blow was given in both cases by a violent and protracted civil war, and both kingdoms were involved in these civil commotions about the same era of time : in the reign of Charles I. of England, and of Louis XIII. of France. The pride and power of the French nobility had appropriated to themselves a very large share of the influence and authority of the kingdom.

Besides the separate power residing in the nobles, there was likewise a distinct power vested in the Huguenots by the edict of Nantes.

These three distinct powers, the throne, the nobles, and the Huguenots, could not exist together harmoniously in a nation like France. Irritation and encroachment would necessarily occur, as indeed they did very frequently, and finally the attraction of these powers against each other threw the kingdom into a most furious and bloody civil war.

Cardinal Richelieu was prime minister of France at that period, and it was chiefly through him that this state of things arose. He saw, by a genius and penetration which lifted him above the common level of the politicians of his day, that the existence of these separate and distinct powers in one kingdom could not be reconciled with the proper exercise of the royal prerogative, nor with the prosperity of the nation.

The politic and persevering cardinal consequently set himself about correcting what he deemed to be a great political error. He resolved to humble the pride of the nobles by restricting their prerogatives, and also to reduce the Huguenots to the common level of other French citizens by divesting them of those political distinctions conferred upon them by the edict of Nantes. These measures of the Cardinal kindled the fires of civil war, and threw the country into a state of commotion and blood ; but he finally triumphed, and placed

in the hands of his sovereign the full and undivided sceptre of royal prerogative.

During the period of this struggle the glory of the French nation was obscured, and her light shone not.

But these commotions finally subsided ; the storm had exhausted itself, and France became, under Louis the XIV., the most magnificent and the most profligate court in Europe.

A third part of the stars were smitten. It has already been remarked, that these stars represent the numerous sovereignties comprehended within the German Empire.

Their numbers were very great, amounting, as Ramsay, in his Universal History, informs us, to three hundred at one time ! Their numbers were varied by the commotions which frequently convulsed that empire ; but all of them during their existence possessed and exercised some political influence, which was graduated by the extent of their authority and the limits of their sovereignty. Many of them were mere *cities*, and from this small compass they gradually ascended to the dimensions of powerful kingdoms.

Besides their political dissimilarity, they also differed in their religion. This latter variety was a source of more disquietude amongst these stars than any political contrariety that distinguished them. They were more or less agitated and thrown into commotion as the emperor inclined to one side or to the other of the great religious struggle. These sovereignties were divided upon the religious reformation which Luther commenced in their midst. Part of them embraced the doctrines of the reformer, and the remainder adhered to the Romish religion. Between these two religious bodies, the emperor frequently found himself a good deal embarrassed. If he inclined to the wishes of one side, the opposite side became clamorous, and threatened resistance ; and if he evinced a disposition to show equal favor to both sides, then neither party was satisfied. In this state of factious turbulence the great Protestant league was formed,

by which all the Protestant sovereignties bound themselves, each to the other, in the defence of their common rights.

This ground has been already gone over, and I only advert to it again for the purpose of giving a more intelligible history of the smiting of those stars, and the darkness which was the consequence of it.

The commotion which the Reformation produced in the German Empire was quieted by the treaty of Passau, or the peace of religion, as it has been called, A. D. 1552.

In this treaty the two great religious parties were secured in certain *political rights*, which were not to be disturbed even by imperial authority. The Protestants were satisfied with the civil rights which were guaranteed to them, and a like satisfaction was expressed by the Catholic party. It was something of the character of the edict of Nantes, which in France guaranteed to the Protestants of that country rights which Louis XIV. subsequently determined to take from them.

Of the treaty of Passau, the historian says: "Such was "the memorable treaty of Passau, which set *limits* to the "authority of Charles V., overturned the vast fabric which "he had employed so many years in erecting, and established "the Protestant Church in Germany upon a firm and secure "basis."*

But as the imperial sceptre passed from hand to hand, it could not be expected that treaties and stipulations would remain unchanged. Charles the V. had resigned the harassing toils of sovereignty, and exchanged the glory of an imperial dominion for the quiet and peace of a cloister, where he had time and opportunity to meditate upon the vanity of worldly greatness, and the folly of attempting, as he said, to compel all men to be of one opinion. And that he might become more familiar with the solemn event of death, he celebrated his own obsequies in a mock funeral, in which he

* Russell's Mod. Europe.

followed his own coffin, shrouded in his winding-sheet, thus giving an impressive commentary upon the littleness of all earthly greatness.

Matthias came to the imperial throne about 1612. He had, while occupying an inferior state of power, led the Protestants to believe he was friendly to their interest ; but he threw off the mask of hypocrisy when he became emperor, and soon gave them to understand that he was now to be regarded by them as their *master*. His short career was marked with little else than that low selfishness which was quite suited to his former duplicity. He busied himself mostly with plans that were intended to secure the crown to his own relatives.

"This family compact alarmed the Evangelical Union, and "occasioned a *revolt* of the Hungarians and Bohemians."

This was the commencement of that state of things in Germany which is implied by the stars being smitten. The Hungarians did not long maintain the position they had taken, but soon submitted to the authority of the emperor, and returned to their former state. But the Bohemian Protestants vehemently persisted in their revolt, and they were joined by other principalities, and finally by a large army of German Protestants. "Thus was kindled," says the historian, "a furious civil war, which desolated Germany, during "thirty years, *interested all the powers of Europe*, and was not "finally extinguished until the peace of Westphalia."*

These wars brought out the highest military skill of Europe, and furnished many instances of bravery and superior generalship not before witnessed in the history of her wars. This was the period in which Sweden gained imperishable renown by the accomplished skill and bravery of her great and generous king, Gustavus Adolphus. Gustavus espoused the cause of the Evangelical Union, and the emperor, Ferdinand the II., found in him an adversary before whom his

* Russell's Modern Europe.

best generals were unable to stand. But the famous battle of Lutzen, while it crowned the Swedish arms with victory, lost to the cause of Protestant Germany the powerful support of its greatest champion. In this battle, through an excess of heroic bravery, Gustavus lost his life. This was a serious and an irreparable disaster to the cause of German liberty. But still the arms of Sweden, under the superior skill of generals who had served under Gustavus, was remarkably successful against the imperial forces, and they continued to the last the best and most efficient supporters of the civil rights and liberties of German Protestants.

A singular feature in this war is noticeable in the course pursued by the Cardinal Richelieu. We have seen the Cardinal actively engaged in overthrowing the Protestants of France, depriving them of their rights under the edict of Nantes, and stripping them of all the political advantages conferred upon them by the edict.

But in the war of Germany the same Cardinal is lavishing the treasures and directing the armies of France, with the greatest energy and activity, in support of those Protestant rights guaranteed by the treaty of Passau. Thus it is that *political* consistency often betrays statesmen into religious *inconsistency.* Richelieu was no friend to Protestantism, and by his measures in France it was deprived of its civil rights; but when he could humble the House of *Austria* by aiding the cause of the German Protestants, he willingly lavished the blood and treasures of France in their support.

Let us inquire more particularly into the origin of this protracted and general war.

That this was not a *religious* war is manifest from the causes which gave rise to it. Had it been such, it would have been treated of under the seals; but under the seals it is not referred to. It is an appropriate subject for the trumpet.

The treaty of Passau left the two great religious parties of Germany in the possession of certain particular rights which

were restrictive upon the power of the emperor. Ferdinand's whole ambition led him to aggrandise the House of Austria, and to overturn every obstacle in the way of imperial prerogative. The first step towards this purpose was the "re-" duction *of the electoral princes* to the condition of grandees " of Spain, and the bishops to the state of *imperial chaplains.*" " Sensible, however, of the danger of alarming *both religions* at " once, he resolved to begin with the Protestants, and accord-" ingly issued an edict, ordering them to restore, without loss " of time, all the benefices and church lands which they had " held since the peace of Passau."

Thus it is plain that the war was not a sectarian war, as the tyrannical measures which gave rise to it were to operate as much against one religious party as the other. Both were involved in the emperor's scheme of taking into his own hands all the power of the German Empire. The Protestants are named as a distinct party in the war, it is true; but the reason of that is, their political rights were the first to be attacked, and their rebellion against the emperor's edict brought on this great war.

That these numerous German sovereignties are the stars spoken of in the text, is evident from the fact that there is no other collection of political powers known in the history of Europe that will at all agree with the metaphor.

These sovereignties were spread over a great extent of the continent of Europe, as the stars are spread over the face of the sky; some of them so small in their territorial limits, and so insignificant in their power, as almost to escape the eye of history, while others again stand out with the strength and distinctness of formidable kingdoms. Just so it is with the stars. Some of these are so diminutive, and appear with a light so feeble, that the eye can scarcely discern them, whilst others shine with a strong and brilliant light.

The prophet says a third part of the stars was smitten, so as the third part of them was darkened, and the night shone not for a third part.

This thirty years' war was a period of great political confusion throughout the German Empire. A long night, in which her stars were buried in the clouds of rebellion and war, and shone not.

But the peace of Westphalia scattered these clouds, cleared the face of the sky, and the stars shone out again with their usual lustre. This peace quieted the disorders of Germany, and her numerous sovereignties were restored to peaceful and harmonious action.

It is remarkable that this war, like the wars that smote the sun and the moon, was also a civil war, and had its origin in rebellion; and that all of them were nearly simultaneous in their existence!

The peculiar manner in which the prophet announces the smiting of the heavenly bodies, and the partial darkness that followed, has been alluded to before. The manner is very different from that in which he speaks of other events; it is very peculiar, and seems expressly aimed to show the remarkable fact, that in the three greatest powers of Europe there would exist about the same period of time a civil war! which was true of England, France, and Germany. These wars embraced almost two-thirds of the 17th century. For ages before, as well as since that period, these nations were engaged in wars. War was then the pastime, and almost the only employment of kings; but of these common outbreaks of human violence, which were of every-day occurrence, the prophet takes no notice. But here is a peculiar state of national commotion in these three countries, happening at the same period of time, which never did exist exactly in that manner before or since; and the prophet seizes upon this singular state of things, and separates it from all others, and holds it up to the gaze and wonder of the world.

What for? it will probably be asked. The answer is—for the purpose of demonstrating the divine authenticity of the Christian revelation!

The prophet selects only such points in the history of the

world as are marked by some peculiarity which is not found in other events of the same general character. This is one of the great outlines of the sensible evidence of the truth of the Christian religion. What but the Spirit of God could enable a man to select from amongst the innumerable events of the world's history for two thousand years to come, those of a peculiar and singular character, and describe them with such exactness, as that the events and the description he gives of them correspond with each other so precisely that no one doubts their identity?

The purpose and design of all this prophecy is, as I have already said, to convince men of the truth of the Christian revelation, or in the precise words of the book itself, which says—"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."* Which, literally understood, means—the verification of these prophecies is given to the church and the world, in confirmation of the religion of Jesus Christ.

Leaving the fourth trumpet, and turning to contemplate the fifth, the attention of the prophet is arrested by the remarkable appearance of an angel flying through the midst of heaven, announcing a solemn warning in the language of the last verse of the chapter.

13. *And I beheld and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying, with a loud voice, Wo, wo, wo, to the inhabiters of the earth, by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are yet to sound.*

The purport of this warning is to signify that the scenes which are to transpire under the last three trumpets will be marked by deeper anguish than any of the preceding. The angel connects with each trumpet a wo, which is to fall upon the inhabitants of the earth at the sounding of each trumpet.

* xix c. 10 ver.

In no instance, either under the seals or the preceding trumpets, are the events of either *foretold*, as those are in the case of the three trumpets yet to sound. These are *anticipated* by the angel, so far at least as to designate the peculiar character of those events.

It is a proper subject of inquiry, what does this angel import? Evidently it is the symbolical representation of something! What is it? The explanation which occurs to me as most consistent with the spirit and purpose of this Revelation is, that this angel represents an era in the history of Christianity. It is expressive of that age of religious light and experience, when the Church, by her superior knowledge of divine truth, and the principles of the divine government over men, lifts her warning voice against national crime and infidelity, and warns the guilty nations of the consequences that must inevitably reach them in the retributive judgments of an offended God.

To perceive the force of this explanation, we have only to look at the labors of the ministry and laymen of the Protestant churches, in their zealous preaching and their powerful writings in the eighteenth century, and down to the present day. What a flood of light and warning they have given to the ungodly nations of the earth, charging their crimes upon them, and denouncing the wo of heaven's anger as the certain retribution of their wickedness.

If we look back to the ages before the Reformation, shall we see such an angel flying in the midst of heaven? or hear such faithful warnings proclaimed to the ungodly nations of those times? Shall we hear the voice of the Church then denouncing the judgments of heaven against national crime? No! but we shall see that Church plunging into the vices and excesses of the nations, and pressing to the lips of the people and their rulers the cup of her own abominations, and increasing their crimes by making them drunk with the wine of her fornication! This is one of the strong distinctive features, amongst others, that mark the difference

between the Church *before* the Reformation and the Church *of* the Reformation!

The next scene in the apocalyptic drama is one of mingled horror and magnificence. The prophet dwells upon it with unusual detail of circumstance. He does not simply announce it, and then, after giving a few brief particulars, turn to another subject; but he points out the different and striking features in the vast representation, and appears to kindle with enthusiasm as he spreads out before the world the splendid imagery of his vision.

Unlike the disclosures made under the preceding trumpets, where each one has its separate and distinct subject, the vast scene which we are now approaching crowds the ample space of two trumpets, and fills it with pictures the most glowing that were ever created by human genius.

The whole drama is *political*, and although the interests of religion are involved, those interests are not permitted to mingle themselves in this disclosure; but they are reserved for a separate chapter, where they are treated in a manner quite different from the present exhibition.

France leads off in this stupendous display of military grandeur. She originated it, and she is conspicuous throughout its various and ever-shifting scenery.

That nation had long given signs of some approaching catastrophe. The reign of Louis the XIV. tore away the safeguards that were thrown around it by his treatment and expulsion of the Huguenots. Ten righteous men would have saved even the city of Sodom, sunken as it was in the deepest and grossest vices. How great must have been the moral restraints, and the consequent security exerted over the French nation by two millions of these righteous people! The banishment of the Huguenots from their native country left nothing behind them to impress upon the moral sense of the great mass of the people either propriety, good order, or due obedience to the laws. There was no restraining hand extended to moderate the violence of party strife—no sooth-

ing voice to calm the irritations, and quench the kindling fires of angry contention.

The cruel and unjust conduct of the throne produced a similar temper and feeling amongst the people—ready to blaze out upon the first presentation of an object calling forth such dispositions. Symptoms of this kind were given out on various occasions in acts of factious violence, and continued to gather strength by the increase of numbers and the open contempt of the laws, until finally, in the reign of Louis the XVI., the spirit of anarchy, no longer restrained by the force of law, burst out, and, seizing the pillars of the temple of monarchy, by one desperate effort brought the whole fabric down with a crash that shook all Europe.

Let us hear the prophet in the vivid description he gives of this event.

CHAPTER IX.

FIFTH TRUMPET.

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION ! !

1. *And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.*

2. *And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit as a smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.*

3. *And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.*

4. *And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree, but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads.*

5. *And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man.*

6. *And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it, and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.*

Thus far the description of the prophet embraces the first three peculiarities of the French Revolution : the downfall of the kingdom, the anarchy which followed it under the figure of a great smoke, and then the heterogeneous form of the government it assumed, under the symbol of the locusts, and the horror attending it through all these scenes, ex-

pressed by the people's desiring to die in order to escape from them.

For the sake of distinctness, I shall make a few remarks upon these three features of the picture before the remaining portion of the chapter is quoted.

A star falls from *heaven* unto the earth. This denotes the overthrow and ruin of a kingdom which had its seat within the bounds of *Christendom*, and in this respect resembling the star under the third trumpet. *And to him* (that is, the power that overthrew this kingdom) *was given the key of the bottomless pit: and he opened the bottomless pit.* This figure illustrates the violent and vicious principles which had grown up and gathered strength in that nation under the example of her bloody and ungodly rulers. These principles had been kept under restraint, under the lock and key of the law, until the desperation and fury of the people broke down those restraints, and unlocked the bottomless pit with the key of the revolution, and let out upon the nation a sweeping flood of violence and anarchy.

The bottomless pit, where "devil with devil damned" conspire and counsel with each other, and form purposes and suggest plans to destroy government and banish religion from the earth, is a most appropriate figure, and illustrates most strikingly the foul and dark laboratory in which French infidelity and anarchy were prepared, by combining the fierce elements of passion, revenge and civil discord, which by its explosion blew up the whole nation, and scattered these elements amongst the other kingdoms of Europe. This is the idea conveyed by the sun and the air being darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

A dense smoke, which blinds the eyes and confounds all objects by its obscurity, is very expressive of the frenzy of the people, and the total subversion of all order and authority which characterized France at that time. She was, in the anarchy of this outbreak of popular fury, like the sea, when its angry billows rise and dash against each other in the wild

fury of the storm. Disorder and confusion reigned everywhere. Clubs and furious parties, under various designations, contended with each other amongst the people, while the Girondists and the Mountain, the leading parties in the national assemblies, stung and maddened each other by fierce denunciation and mutual crimination.

This was the second stage of the revolution—the great smoke, which ended in the murder of Louis the XVI., their king.

The death of the monarch called for a power to take his place—a government was now to be constructed. This was the Republic, and was the third stage of the revolution. The prophet aptly terms this the *Locust* power. The metaphor implies multitudes, devastation and headlong impetuosity, without established system or permanent government. The Locusts that came out of the great smoke signify the Republican Government, as they called it, which succeeded the days of blood and anarchy. This government was altogether military, and, with the natural appetite of the locust for destruction, it began its career by denouncing and threatening all the monarchies of Europe! This hideous monster, the offspring of anarchy and blood, aroused the nations, and Europe armed for its destruction. Almost every power of Europe collected its strength and combined with the rest to destroy it. But it is a surprising fact that, nothwithstanding this vast combination of military force and skill, and notwithstanding the frequent tumults which still disturbed France, the want of proper discipline, and the frequent acts of insubordination amongst the people, still she could not be conquered. If one body of the Locust power was crushed, another swarm, fresh and vigorous, rushed out and took its place, and drove back the assailants with headlong fury. One of the most remarkable features in the history of the French Revolution, is the success with which the nation maintained itself, in the midst of constantly recurring disorders, against the disciplined armies of all Europe

An interdict was laid upon the ravages of these Locusts; and so directly was it opposed to their natural tastes in feeding, that it must be intended to show that this power, which threatened all Europe with overthrow, was itself under the control of an invisible restraint. The grass, and the green things of earth's production, as well as the tree, are the appropriate food of the locust ; yet it was commanded them not to hurt any of these, but only those men, those civil institutions or governments, which have not the seal of God in their foreheads—the term *men* being used to signify governments.

The French Assembly had renounced all religion, denied the existence of God, and gloried in its infidelity. Such a nation would be naturally led to assail all institutions of religion, as the locust would be led to feed upon the green growth of the earth ; but they were restrained from doing violence to any government where the seal of God was seen ; and those whom they were permitted to hurt they were not to *kill* them, but merely *torment* them *five months!* Five months is the *duration of the life* of the locust, and the idea conveyed here is, that as long as this power existed it would torment these nations that had not the seal of God in their forehead—not destroy them, nor denationalize them, but torment them, as a scorpion inflicts torment when he striketh a man ; and for this purpose power was given to them, as the scorpions of the earth have power. It is said of the scorpion that its bite is productive of great pain, with a burning inflammation and irritation, but seldom proves fatal. This singular effect upon the governments of Europe was signally exemplified in the French wars under Bonaparte. This extraordinary man became the head and the soul of the vast Locust army, and he strode over Europe treading the crowns of her potentates under his feet. He did not kill them by destroying their national identity, but he tormented them by uncrowning their kings and setting up others in their stead. In this way he inflamed and irritated the sovereigns of Eu-

rope, and stung their pride, with a chagrin and mortification more poignant to them than death.

Before leaving this aspect of the revolution, there is another circumstance worthy of notice, upon which I will offer a remark. It is said in the 2d verse, that, by reason of the great smoke which came out of the bottomless pit, the *sun* and the *air* were darkened!

It is well known that whatever darkens the air hinders the shining of the sun. But the text not only says that this smoke darkened the *air*, but that it also darkened the *sun!* The air being a general term means that Europe generally was affected by this smoke; but the sun being specially referred to, implies that the darkening effect of this smoke was felt in *England*, the sun of Europe, as I have assumed her to be. England was darkened by this smoke, or troubled by the French Revolution, in the singular effect it had upon her people.

The historian of those times speaks of the confusion that arose in England thus: "The spirit of party raged with re-"doubled violence throughout the kingdom, towards which, "indeed, food was constantly administered by the passing "events of the *French Revolution*."* Fearful riots and mobs, which in some instances continued their destructive violence upon property for three or four days. Such was their numbers, and so ferocious the spirit by which they were actuated, that the civil power found it necessary to act with great caution, and let the fire subside before it proceeded to punish the rioters. The country as well as the cities suffered from these lawless proceedings. "The dread of that spirit of innovation "which the French Revolution had fostered" operated upon the members of the English Parliament, and led them to conciliatory measures towards the people, whose minds were thrown into a state of dangerous fermentation by the scenes which were occurring in France. So serious had matters

* Russell's Modern Europe.

become, that "a royal proclamation was issued for prevent-
"ing seditious meetings and publications, in which magis-
"trates were enjoined to oppose them by all legal means,
"and the people were strongly exhorted to submission."

These steps occasioned almost an unprecedented ferment throughout the country, and they were generally considered to have been occasioned by Paine's pamphlet, entitled, "*The* "*Rights of Man.*"*

Even the navy of England became infected with this smoke from the French revolution, and squadrons of ships were snatched from the authority of their commanders. Her fleets were endangered by the spirit of insubordination then abroad through all Europe, and it was not without great difficulty and the most adroit management that order was restored amongst the brave and hardy tars of England. These facts are given merely to indicate the effects which were produced upon England by the smoke out of the bottomless pit, and as further evidence going to show that England is the nation that holds the conspicuous and pre-eminent station of the sun in the Apocalypse!

These effects, as far as I have adverted to them, were only political; but others of a religious character were quite as threatening and alarming.

With the wild uproar of civil discord came also the bold and daring spirit of French Atheism! No God! no Religion! no Bible! communicated by this spirit, was soon heard amongst the people of England. Protestant England blushed to hear her children repeating the horrid sounds of French blasphemy; and her churches all over the land were aroused to watchfulness, and arrayed themselves against the foe. The crisis was met by her able divines, who poured out from the press and the pulpit such a flood of Christian doctrine and Gospel truth, as speedily banished the spirit of French Atheism. The smoke was dispelled both from the

* Russell.

civil and religious sky of England, and the sun of Europe resumed its former brightness. In reality, England suffered nothing. The blast of popular fury which gave this great Protestant tree a momentary shaking, caused it to strike its roots deeper in the soil of her people's affections; and the Church strengthened the bulwarks of her theology, and increased the light of her Christian doctrine. She was the *tree* which these locusts were not to hurt—she had the seal of God in her forehead. Napoleon made vast preparations to cross the Channel, and throw an army upon England; but he never was able to start this enterprise.

The 6th verse concludes this part of the vision. "*In those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.*"

No other language could adequately convey an idea of the horror and anguish which shook the public mind of France, but Paris particularly, in those days of the revolution. The palace of the King presented a scene of terror which beggars all human description; and the nobility, and men of lower station too, suffered the grossest and most cruel indignities from the turbulence of infuriated mobs.

We are not to take this language of the prophet literally, however, because death was within reach of every one.

These men, from the King down to the lowest officer connected with the monarchy, could have produced their own death at any moment.

The meaning probably is this,—they sought official death, but could not obtain it. They would cheerfully have exchanged the honor and power of high and distinguished political station, in which their pride had gloried, for the condition of the most humble citizen; but this desirable change fled from them—they could not escape from the consequences of their public station. They resigned, it is true, but the vengeance of the mob still pursued them, and demanded their blood for what they had done in those high stations.

We proceed now to consider the next six verses of the chapter, which will complete the first woe.

7. *And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.*

8. *And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions.*

9. *And they had breast-plates, as it were breast-plates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.*

10. *And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails, and their power was to hurt men five months.*

11. *And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit; whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.*

12. *One woe is past, and behold there come two woes more hereafter.*

A great change passes over the nation, in the prophet's, view. He no longer sees the thick smoke of mobbish tumult and violence, nor the headlong flight of locusts. The locusts have assumed the shapes of horses. The power of the nation is now under a new form; system and order are seen, represented by horses *prepared* unto battle.

This whole power is represented as wearing—not *a crown!* but *crowns* of gold.

This is the grand Empire of France, spreading out over Europe and comprehending within its dominion, numerous kingdoms.

Napoleon is at the head of this vast power; he has merged the Republic in the splendor of an Empire, and kings obey his commands and wear their crowns, or surrender them, at his bidding.

And their faces were as the faces of men. France was

now a rational government again ; the reign of authority and law was restored. Her former tumultuous assemblies and her fierce impetuous convention were superseded by more dignified forms of legislation.

Thus faces of men—that is, rational and civilized legislation, took the place of the former brutal outrages of the maddened populace. This is the character of the new form of the *civil* government ; and that we may be fully certified of the nation he is speaking of, the prophet gives us a most striking illustration of its *social* character. "And they had "hair, *as the hair of women!*" This is a delicate and beautiful figure, designed to express that elegance of manner and graceful etiquette for which the French nation has been more remarkable than any other nation since the days of Francis I.

As she was the first nation in Europe to introduce into her court, the charms and elegance of female society ; so she has been the most constant observer of the etiquette of social refinement. French politeness and civility are proverbial the world over. In all that charms the eye, that gives life and vivacity to society, accomplishment and elegance to manners, the French nation in the eighteenth century was decidedly pre-eminent. "She led the graceful tastes of Europe."

Womanly grace and beauty are incomplete without the adorning of the full, perfect head of hair! The Apostle speaks of this as the glory of her person, 1 Cor. 11 : 14. There is nothing more agreeable to the eye, fond of gazing upon the natural perfections and beauty of the human form, than the rich suit of hair when tastefully arranged, and adorning the female head. The simple elegance and dignity which this imparts to the other features of woman's loveliness, give indeed a crowning glory to her charms.

The Greek and Roman women paid great attention to, and displayed the highest taste in the arrangement of this natural ornament of their persons. And so devoted were they to the tasteful and ingenious disposition of it, that the admoni-

tion of the Apostle became necessary to warn Christian women not to neglect the more important ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, while attending to this ornament of their heads.

To point out the nation whose social habits were eminently graceful and refined was evidently the design of the prophet in this chaste and beautiful figure. Nowhere is society polished and refined, except where woman holds an elevated and commanding position. This was peculiarly the state of French society, when in its tranquil state, free from the frenzy and violence of revolutionary horrors.

But alas ! with all this surpassing blandness and grace in their manners, their *teeth* were as the teeth of *lions ;* that is, they were war-like in their temper and disposition. Their national instincts were decidedly inclined to the perils of war—not that they were blood-thirsty ; they did not delight in *killing* men ; but the national taste was altogether in favor of the stirring and sublime scenes of war ! The thunder, the fire, and the tempest of the battle-field formed the element which they delighted to live in.

But even in war they maintained their characteristic gaiety and politeness. They came into the field of conflict with the gaiety and sprightliness of men just entering upon some scene of cheerful festivity. And when a Frenchman shot a fellow down, he would stop if he had time, beg his pardon, and offer him wine from his canteen, and hope the wound was not severe !

When Murat charged a body of Mamelukes in Egypt, the fellows had like to have forgotten their danger in the astonishment and admiration with which they gazed upon the splendid and graceful horsemanship of the French general.

We have now seen this nation, whose fall opened the bottomless pit, in several features of its character. First in its Revolution, next in its Republic, and lastly in its Empire form. And besides these political aspects, the prophet has also given us a very decided intimation of its social character.

He now proceeds to show us the military power of the nation in which the Empire displayed its chief grandeur. The crowns of gold, indicative of its dominion over many kingdoms, have already been adverted to; the military character of the power is now introduced, beginning with the 9th verse. *They had breast plates, as it were breast plates of iron!*

The prophet does not refer to any defensive armor worn by the French soldiers; it is a figure employed to express the indomitable courage of the French force. Their undaunted bravery was beyond the reach of fear, and was no more affected by it than the breast plate of iron could be impressed by the sword! They rushed upon danger and death with as little thought of consequences, as if they were enjoying the sports of a tournament. Indeed it is said that in some of the terrible shocks of battle, when the French cavalry could not force the walls of bristling bayonets, raised by the firm squares of English infantry, they would discharge their arms, then throw them at the heads of the infantry, and sit upon their horses with taunting defiance, while the balls flew amongst them like hail! This desperate courage was the iron breast-plate.

And the sound of their wings, was as the sound of chariots, of many horses running to battle.

The prophet leaves the present mode of warfare in this part of his description, and glances back at the olden times, when war-chariots were in use.

The fleetest horses were employed in this service; and when these chariots, filled with armed men, rushed over the plain, or down the rugged mountain, in pursuit of the foe, the wild and hideous noise which their movements produced filled their enemies with terror.

This is precisely what the prophet intends to represent, viz., the *terror* which the movements of the French armies inspired. The kingdom against which they directed their march was conquered—was terrified into submission by the

sound of their wings before they reached its frontiers. Such was the terror of the French arms on the continent of Europe. Their movements created a panic in every direction in which they moved, which unnerved their enemies, and made their resistance feeble.

10. *And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails, and their power was to hurt men five months.*

The natural history of the scorpion is referred to. This insect is found in different countries of the warmer climates—in South America, Southern Europe, in Asia, and Africa. In Africa is found the largest species, as well as the most dangerous, from the greater virulence of its sting. Its numerous legs, and its eyes, as many as eight, with its long fore-reaching claws, or hands, affixed near the head, with which it grasps its prey, and then its enormous tail, which it drags after it, altogether render it a hateful and fearful insect.

The tail is the part which is at present referred to by the prophet.

This cumbersome portion of the animal is long, heavy, and curved, or crooked, at the end. In the extremity of the tail the sting is fixed, and in close connexion with it are two delicate orifices, from which a poisonous liquor is discharged into the wound made by the sting.

This ill-proportioned tail dragged after the scorpion, from its appearance suggests no idea at all of utility, but rather has the appearance of a useless and troublesome appendage; but the great power of the insect to inflict injury lies in the tail. When the scorpion has reached and seized its victim with its fore-claws, the tail is suddenly thrown forward, quite over the entire length of the body, and strikes its sting into the victim, at the same time injecting the poison, which produces acute pain and inflammation. This operation hastens the death of the small insects on which it feeds, but seldom produces any result beyond severe inflammation in larger animals, or man, that may be struck by it. There have been

instances where death has followed the strike of the scorpion; but this very rarely occurs, never indeed where the simple remedies in common use are promptly resorted to. I need not pursue the history of the insect any further. What has been stated is sufficient to show the application of the figure.

We must not forget that the prophet is describing a great military power, and the locust with the scorpion are the symbols by which he chiefly illustrates this power in its mode of operating. The inhabitants of those countries which suffer from the ravages of the locust, regard their approach with the utmost dismay, expecting nothing less than the total devastation of the fruits of the earth.

The scorpion tail is evidently intended to represent the *artillery*, the most effective and destructive arm of this military power. We shall see a most surprising coincidence between the scorpion's tail, and his manner of using it, and the artillery connected with the army.

The cavalry and infantry of the army possess the power of locomotion, and move with ease and celerity in any direction. But the artillery, like a lifeless and cumbrous mass, has to be *dragged* in whatever direction the army moves, as the scorpion's tail is dragged along after its body. But when the enemy is brought within proper distance, then the artillery looses its cumbrous and lifeless drag, and is thrown forward in advance of the army, and strikes its venomous sting into the foe by rapid and destructive explosions; and if the ground does not afford a suitable position in front, it takes some elevated position in the rear, and throwing over the entire body of the army, drives its sting into the foe with equal certainty and effect! With what surprising precision has the prophet illustrated this branch of modern warfare, simply by the habits of the scorpion!

And their power was to hurt men five months. The locust part of the figure is here referred to again. As before remarked, that insect lives and devours only about *five months* in the year, from the last of April to the last of September;

and the prophet means to say that, as long as this scorpion power exists, and retains its extensive dominion, it will continue to sting and inflame Europe.

The prophet concludes his description of this gigantic power by now showing us its moral qualities :

11. *And they had a king over them which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon.*

Both names signify destroyer. We are not to suppose that the allusion is to any particular individual.

Napoleon, as a man, was no more in the eye of the prophet than Danton, Marat, or Robespierre was. In truth, the darkest and most vicious aspect of this power was seen before Bonaparte stood at the head of it. It was he who redeemed it from its savage character : it was under his direction that it assumed the faces of men and wore its crowns of gold.

But it was a power embodying within itself the principles of the bottomless pit, and its ruling genius was the spirit of absolute evil—the hated and denounced spirit of *Infidelity* and *Atheism.* These were the distinguishing traits of its moral character.

Infidelity and Atheism are synonymous with opposition to God and hatred of his righteous government. They constitute the angel of the bottomless pit denounced in the *Old Testament*, signified by the Hebrew tongue, and in the *New Testament*, signified by the Greek tongue, as a *destroyer !*

What should we expect when such a power as this is turned loose upon the world, but that it would at once fall upon the institutions which shield and defend virtue and piety in the earth, just as naturally as the vast clouds of locusts fall upon the grass, the green things, and the trees of the earth, as their appropriate food.

Happily for the world, and especially so for Europe, there was a power above, and superior to this Apollyon. This angel of the bottomless pit, although crowned and armed

with all the physical powers necessary to enable it to effect unlimited destruction, was nevertheless under control. There was a hook in the jaws of the great Leviathan, and while he threw all Europe into commotion, he was firmly held by the strong hand of Providence to the track in which he was permitted to move. This was the hand which the Psalmist says, *stilleth the noise of the seas, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.*

We are notified of this restraining power being laid upon this destroyer in the beginning of his movements: *And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree.* Thank God for interposing this restriction upon the power of Apollyon! Protestantism, then in her infancy, startled and alarmed at every shock of this infidel power, owed its security to the shielding hand of this restraint.

These metaphors refer to those countries where the happy effects of the Reformation were most visible—where Protestantism sat hearing the howl of the dreadful storm as it swept over Europe, but suffered nothing from its destroying power.

In different parts of Europe and in America might be seen, in one place, the flourishing fields of green grass, and in another the smaller patches of green things, refreshing the eye and cheering the hope of Protestant Christianity; but in England stood up the *great tree*, strong and towering, spreading out her boughs, loaded with the precious fruits of gospel truth, which she sent *freely* and plentifully with her commerce to all the nations of the earth.

But this angel of the bottomless pit destroyed something. It could have no action without destroying. The question is, what did it destroy? The answer is, in the first place, it destroyed nothing that was worth preserving; and yet the havoc it made in Europe was tremendous.

It will be remembered that its license extended only to hurting those men which have not the seal of God in their

foreheads, and these they were not empowered to *kill*, but merely to torment them for a time.

The prophet is not speaking of men as individuals. Men are named here as representatives of their religious and political or civil institutions ; and wherever these did not wear the seal of God, that is, were not adapted to the government of God and the advancement of Protestant Christianity in the earth, they were legitimate objects for the hurting power of this angel.

A very superficial glance at the history of the sovereignties of continental Europe, as well before as since the Reformation, will show that the people were excluded from any participation or privileges in the government—that kings assumed to be the only lords of the world, and held their subjects to be the mere creatures of their will, to be used by them as beasts of burthen, to toil and suffer, and die in the bloody strifes of their ungodly ambition. The people, too, had no other thought than that kings were their rightful masters, and to obey was the only act that belongs to them. This was their political condition, and their religious state was in close resemblance to it.

In short, the whole physical and intellectual power of the people was under the feet of the crowned heads of continental Europe, while their religious and moral feelings were bound down under a superstitious devotion to popery. The only religious sentiment ever impressed upon their minds was, that all the power necessary to their pardon and salvation was with the pope. They knew nothing of the gospel doctrines of repentance and salvation by faith in Christ. In respect to all such matters God was not in all their thoughts ; the pope and no other power filled the small compass of their ideas of accountability.

The greediness with which the indulgences of Leo X. were bought up by the multitude of all ranks, fully corroborates this position ; and I presume no candid Papist will deny it.

This peculiar character of their religion necessarily shut

out God from their minds. The Pope and the Church were the only source of religious authority that they had any idea of. What these commanded they implicitly obeyed. The infallibility of the Pope, and the dictum of the Church, were the foundation and cap-stone of their faith.

Nor can it be supposed by any one who lives in the present enlightened age, while this state of religious bondage and darkness oppressed the minds of the people, that such means as are provided by the Gospel could have any effect to lead men to look to God alone for pardon and salvation. The bandage that blinds the eyes must first be removed, before the man can see the light!

Both the religious and political condition of the people was a pure despotism. Men no more thought of questioning the right of the King to take their lives, if he saw fit to order them to be slain, than they thought of questioning the power of the Pope to keep them out of heaven by excommunication!

These delusions had to be dispelled before Europe could, to any great extent, be regenerated in her civil and religious state. The whole tide of popular feeling had to be changed. Instead of regarding kings as the only political power, and the Pope as the sole disposer of religious rights and privileges, the people had to learn that they also were men, bearing the stamp and image of their Creator, and *entitled* to those rights belonging to humanity.

This change of feeling could only be effected by events which would humble the pride and power of kings, and inspire their subjects with a sense of their natural rights, and at the same time would strike from the hand of Popery the sceptre of universal religious dominion, and elevate the minds of the people to a consciousness of their own consequence and worth in the broad and paternal scheme of God's mercy.

These very events were brought about and successfully applied by this angel of the bottomless pit! And is it not a most striking and wonderful display of the overruling provi-

dence of God, that this power that broke out of the long and galling tyranny of despotic civil government, and the accumulation of long-endured oppression and corruption of the church, should become the instrument of stinging and inflaming and hurting this very political and religious despotism and corruption that produced it, until their pride was humbled and their powers broken?

It was the mighty power of kingly *despotism* which kept the mind of Europe from rising to the enjoyment of rational liberty and civil rights, which are the birth-right of all men, that this angel of the bottomless pit destroyed; and it was he, too, that struck the tiara of universal religious dominion from the head of the Romish Church, and threw the Pope into exile and prison.

The thrones and crowns of Europe were tossed and tumbled about by the French armies like household lumber, and the whole system of civil government was thrown into the wildest confusion. They put up and pulled down monarchs, until the very people who had before regarded kings with profoundest awe, and heard their name with feelings of irrepressible dread, were now amazed at beholding their utter helplessness!

The people would hardly credit their own senses, as they beheld how easy it was to make and unmake kings! And what they saw suggested a thought to their minds, that had not occurred to them before—"If the French army can do this, is it not in *our power* to raise an army that can do so, too?" These thoughts presently grew into words, and these words went amongst the people like electricity, kindling as they went the fire of enthusiastic and determined purpose to have the rights that belonged to them as men.

This commenced the era of revolutions. Revolution succeeded revolution, like wave following wave. Constitutional governments were demanded by the people, and kings were compelled to listen to these demands or lose their crowns.

This was the state of the people alluded to by the Emperor

of Austria, in his speech to the Hungarian Diet in 1820, not very long after the days of Bonaparte. "The whole world," said the Emperor, "has become foolish, and leaving their "ancient laws, are in search of imaginary *constitutions!*"

This is the very point aimed at. The people were roused from their long sleep of tyranny, and feeling that they were men, and had rights, they demanded *constitutions* that should guarantee these rights to them and their children.

A similar change passed upon the religious mind of Europe!

In 1797 the French army marched into Rome, and seized the Pope and his cardinals and made them prisoners. They abolished the papal throne, in this instance going a step beyond what they had done with other powers, and established a Republic in its stead, and in order to make the reverse as stinging as possible, they planted in the City of Rome the tree of liberty! Ever since that blow was given to the papal dominion, the people have gradually ceased to regard the pope as the exclusive dispenser of Heaven's mercies, or the sole executioner of God's wrath upon the nations of the earth.

Where do we now hear the groans and shrieks of the victims of an inquisition? Nowhere! When did Europe witness the monstrous presumption of a bull issued from Rome, hurling the Pope's anathema against any of its kings? These things have all passed away, and the people, now enjoying the light of a purer and better religion, regard the delusions of pretended miracles and senseless mummery as the relics of a barbarous and ignorant age of Christianity. The whole system, "with all its deceivableness of lying wonders" by which it gained such universal dominion over the minds of the people in the dark ages, has been gradually sinking and crumbling into ruins since it was so severely stung by the scorpion in 1797, and in subsequent years. Its prolonged existence is not owing to any intrinsic worth or merit which it possesses, but to the bayonets of Austria! a government

whose proverbial obscurity of intellect, and incorrigible bigotry, exactly adapt it to be the fostering power of error and superstition.

The extent of this scorpion power was limited to hurting the men who had not the seal of God in their forehead—it was not to *kill them!* And this forbearance was remarkably shown in the treatment of those kingdoms which were conquered by it. They were left in the possession of their former limits and form of government, with the exception of Rome. All the change that it made was in the throne. He took the crown from the head of one and placed it on the head of another, and left the government to be administered as it had been before. This was no crusade against *kingly government.* The power that this angel of the bottomless pit was permitted to exercise, was for the *reformation* of kingly government. It was to extract from it the poison of despotism, and adapt it to the improvement and happiness of the people, by breaking down the barriers which kept out the light of rational liberty and prevented the free exercise of true religion.

The work which was to lead to the overthrow of the political and religious *despotism* of Europe, was now accomplished; and with its termination, *one woe passed!*

We see from the history by which the prophecy is explained that this woe was of a *political* nature. It commenced with the revolution, continued through all the terrible scenes of that fearful period, and finally ended with the complete triumph of the French empire in Europe.

But the work of the scorpion power was done! and the next scene, under the sixth trumpet, presents us with a view of its destruction. This occupies the remaining portion of the chapter.

THE SIXTH TRUMPET.

Four of the great powers of Europe unite to overthrow the French Empire !

The end of the reign of Napoleon !

The establishment of the peace of Europe !

13. *And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,*

14. *Saying, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.*

15. *And the four angels were loosed which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.*

16. *And the number of the army of the horsemen were two hundred thousand thousand : and I heard the number of them.*

17. *And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breast-plates of fire, and of jacinth and brimstone : and the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions, and out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke and brimstone.*

18. *By these three was the third part of men killed by the fire, and by the smoke and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.*

19. *For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails : for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.*

20. *And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood : which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.*

21. *Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.*

This new military combination comes before us under very

different aspects from that one whose history we have just closed.

The first, the locust and scorpion power, sprung from the *bottomless pit*, and spread dismay and terror over Europe. The second, whose history we now enter upon, wears the appearance of order and dignity. There is nothing savage about it. The prophet presents it as a great multitude, but without confusion. There is no darkening of the sun and the air by its movements, nor is there any command forbidding it to destroy the green grass, nor any green thing, nor the trees of the earth. It has none of the locust appetite for destruction, nor the innate poison of the scorpion sting.

The first thing that strikes us in connection with the history of this power is the voice from the four horns of the golden altar, ordering the removal of the only obstacle in the way of forming this military combination : *Loose the four angels bound in the great river Euphrates.* I shall not regard the particular order in which the verses stand in commenting upon this portion of the chapter, but shall speak of them promiscuously, and as the general scope of the whole subject may suggest.

The horrors of the French Revolution, and the irresistible power of the armies of the empire, excited alarm in all parts of the world, and Christians everywhere implored the interposing hand of God to *still the noise of the sea, the noise of their waves, and the tumult of the people.*

The voice heard from the four horns of the golden altar, in answer to these prayers, is the command to *loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.*

The prophet says that those four angels were prepared for an *hour*, a *day*, a *month*, and a *year*, for to slay the third part of men. They were not the heterogeneous mass, hurried together without concert or order. They had from the beginning—the hour—up to the utmost extent of their military existence, implied by the full period of a year, a perfect organization, order and object. They did not spring from the

wild anarchy of revolution, but were appointed specifically, providentially.

They differed, too, from the first power in their commission. They were not limited to the hurting of men, but they were appointed to *slay the third* part of men. In a word, they were *appointed* to slay or kill the French Empire—to break it up and scatter it, so that it would trouble Europe no more.

The altar signifies offerings. But there were two kinds of altars—one on which the incense of prayer and faith was offered to God, and another on which the offering and smoke of idolatrous incense was seen.* To distinguish these, the true altar, on which was offered the prayers of a pure and holy Christianity, is called the golden altar, and its four horns imply that in each of the four grand divisions of the earth were found those who offered upon this altar the sacrifice of a holy and spiritual worship.

But there is nothing in all that the prophet says in his description of this power so extraordinary, as the intimate and particular knowledge which he seemed to possess of even the secret negotiations of the cabinets of Europe at the time he speaks of.

All Europe had made efforts to resist the progress of the French army. The great and the small kingdoms had thrown themselves across its way, but with no other result than total defeat. The forces of those kingdoms were conquered, walked over, and trampled upon, and the torrent of French triumph rolled on unobstructed.

Two powers, and even three, had combined and acted in concert, but still they failed ; nor did their efforts produce any advantageous results until the *four* principal monarchies combined their forces as one army. When this was done the hand of the destroyer was stayed, and the tide of successful battle was rolled back upon him with tremendous effect.

* 20th verse.

But the point to which I refer as being so extraordinary, is the declaration of the prophet, that the difficulty or hindrance to the union of the four angels arose from a certain *political* interest, bearing upon the Turkish Empire ;—bound ! he says ; these four angels are bound in the *great river Euphrates !*

The Euphrates is not a great river in comparison with many rivers in Europe ; but as the symbol of the Turkish nation, the vast Mohammedan power, it is truly a great river.

Its borders have generally been the dwelling place of the Turks, and when the prophet speaks of the Euphrates, we at once interpret his meaning to be, the Turkish Empire.

There was, then, some *political* interest in regard to Turkey that swayed the mind of one or more of these powers ! This was literally true. Russia meditated the design of adding a part of European Turkey to her already immense dominions. But to this England was decidedly hostile ; as a measure which would be likely to disturb the balance of power in Europe and give an undue preponderance to Russia.

The negotiations of these two Cabinets upon this subject, assumed a tone and decision which rendered it impossible for them to coalesce harmoniously in the great work of arresting the French arms ! and thus they were *bound* in the great river Euphrates !

But Russia, when invaded by the French armies, saw Moscow in flames, and St. Petersburgh threatened, and found it necessary to relinquish her purposes upon Turkey and coalesce with the other great powers against France.

History will throw important light upon this part of prophecy. As before remarked, the obstacle to the union of the four great powers necessary to effect the overthrow of the great scorpion power, existed in the designs of Russia upon Turkey, which the former power was then engaged in prosecuting. History says : "Russia continued throughout this "year (1811) to waste its population and revenues in a con-

"test with the Ottoman Porte, which was carried on with "vigorous efforts on both sides. At the close of the year, the "Russian arms had decidedly obtained that superiority which "skill and discipline must always eventually obtain over blind "valor. The Emperor of Russia might, at his pleasure, dis-"engage himself from the burden of a war of ambition ; but "difficulties were now impending over him of a more serious "kind. He was now the only continental sovereign capable "of asserting his independence against that colossal power "which aimed at nothing less than rendering all Europe sub-"servient to its views, and his determination to maintain that "dignified situation was now to be put to the proof. * * * "A train of negotiations now commenced between Russia, "Sweden and England. While the political affairs of Eu-"rope were thus in a state of suspense and uncertainty, "speculative politicians amused themselves and others with "numerous and various conjectures. * * * It was al-"leged that Russia, by engaging again in a war with France, "would be stopped in her progress towards the conquest of "European Turkey, and even lose all that she had recently "gained in that quarter. It was observed that two more "campaigns would bring the Russian armies to the shores "of the Propontis and the gates of Constantinople, and the "inference was that it could not be expected that Russia "would sacrifice her hopes of conquest for the barren and "dangerous glory of a war with France."

These were the speculations of politicians, but it did not occur to them that the command had gone forth more than seventeen hundred years before : *Loose the four angels bound in the great river Euphrates.* This had to be done, and Russia must lose all that she had gained in her contest with Turkey. This she did, in consequence of measures which clearly indicated the purpose of Napoleon to throw his armies in the direction of Russia. While France was drawing her forces towards Russia, making treaties and forming alliances, to enable him to make a powerful and successful effort against

her, " the Emperor of Russia also concluded a treaty of peace " with the Ottoman Porte, to which he restored the conquests " recently made in Moldavia and Wallachia, thus *enabling* " *him to withdraw his armies from the banks of the Danube.* " All matters of dispute were also settled between Russia and " *Great Britain.*"*

Thus was the impediment removed which bound the four angels in the great Euphrates ; or, to speak literally, the treaties made between these three powers placed Russia in a position which shortly led to the coalition of the four great European powers, Russia, Austria, England and Prussia—*the four angels which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.*

The description of this united host, as the prophet saw it, is sublime. He represents its vast powers under the appearance of two hundred thousand thousands of horses !

It must be borne in mind that in these war scenes the horse is the *emblem* of power. We compute the power of machinery by the strength of the horse. When we speak of our steamers being of two, three, or five hundred horse-power, we do not mean that there are so many horses in the boat, nor does the prophet mean that the vast number of horses he speaks of were actually in this army ; but he means to convey the idea of a vast military organization, fully adequate to the object for which it was appointed.

The scorpion power was seen wearing *one* breast-plate, which was *iron.* By this was represented not only the indomitable energy and courage of the French soldiery, but it expresses also the unlimited authority exercised by Napoleon over the forces of the kingdoms under subjection to him, so that their armies were merged in the French army in such a way as to present the appearance and prowess of but *one* nation.

This was not the case with the power now under the eye of

* Russell's Modern Europe.

the prophet. He sees it wearing three different kinds of breast-plates—the first of *fire*, the second was a *jacinth*, and the third was *brimstone.* These three different breast-plates imply the presence of different nations, varying in their military habits.

These nations were not brought together by the controlling authority of one great leader, as in the case of the scorpion power, but each, by its own act of national independence of the rest, coalesced, and formed the threefold breast-plate.

Neither were the three breast-plates intended to signify the exact number of the kingdoms or nations embraced in this alliance; but they convey the general military peculiarity of the principal powers. Fire, throughout the Book of Revelation, is the emblem of war and its desolations. The continental powers in this coalition—Russia, Austria, and Prussia, with other smaller powers—lived in this element of fire: it was congenial to their tastes and habits. They were always employed either in wars of conquest or in defending themselves from the grasping power of some other nation. The breast-plate of fire is a fit representation of them in their warlike habits.

The next is the jacinth, a pellucid gem. Gems are significant of purity and perfection, and emblematic of just and righteous principles in the administration of government and the objects of their wars.

The jacinth in the present instance is a proper emblem of England as a member of this great military power. The armies of England were not employed in wanton and lawless war. She did not snuff the field of blood with delight, and rush to battle regardless of the principles of humanity and religion; her constitutional government was against all this. She entered into war for the maintenance of those principles which she conceived essential to the preservation of sound government and the just rights of nations. She was the jacinth that shone amongst the breast-plates of this stupendous coalition.

The next was the brimstone—a fit emblem of the Turkish power, which was likewise employed in this struggle.

Brimstone is the roughest and coarsest material in the composition of gunpowder ; but it is a most furious and dangerous substance when in that combination it comes in contact with fire.

Every one at all acquainted with the Turkish practice in war will readily recognize this brimstone breast-plate as most clearly applicable to that ferocious people. Their savage disposition was signally manifested in the horrid butcheries they practised upon the French prisoners at Acre, where they cut off the heads of their prisoners as fast as they fell into their hands, and presented the gory head as the most desirable trophy to the commander of the fortress. This savage cruelty was afterwards most terribly revenged upon these barbarians by the French at Aboukir.

The Turks became actors in this coalition in consequence of Napoleon's invasion of Egypt and Syria.

I cannot conceive of any other explanation of these varying breast-plates so satisfactory to my own mind as the above. The idea that the prophet would occupy himself with a description of men's clothing merely—military uniforms, if you please—seems to me to be a degradation of the dignity and sacredness of his office. This explanation of the fire, the jacinth and the brimstone, in connection with this battle host, does not preclude the use of the same emblems *elsewhere* to illustrate different things.

And the heads of the horses were as the heads of lions. We are not to entertain the idea of the *heads* of either of those animals literally ; but it is a particular kind of power, a weapon remarkable for its destructiveness, that the prophet is referring to. It is compared to the lion's head because of the tremendous powers of that animal to tear and rend its prey with its jaws. *And out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.* The prophet could not have conveyed the idea of

gunpowder more forcibly unless he had called it by its real name.

These lions' heads, then, are projectiles thrown by the force of gunpowder. And what are these projectiles, so destructive in their effects as to resemble the ferocious and rending powers of the lion's jaws? They represent the enormous *bombshells* thrown amongst the French army from the English ships in the bay of Acre, when the French were endeavoring to subdue that impregnable fortress. These shells were thrown to a great distance, and they flew through the air with a terrific roar, even as the lion roareth for his prey; and when they fell and exploded, they tore up the earth, and destroyed everything around them. The fury and violence of the lion tearing his prey to pieces is a most forcible illustration of the destruction that attends the explosion of a bombshell.

18. *By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.*

19. *For their power is in their mouth and in their tails; for their tails were like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.*

These two verses comprehend the principal means of warfare employed at the time to which the prophet refers. Evidently, the artillery holds a prominent rank in the description, although not to the entire exclusion of smaller arms. In the scorpion power the same weapon is figuratively described by the scorpion's *tail*, with its sting; but it is now referred to under the form of *serpents*—perhaps in allusion to the fiery serpents, which proved so destructive to the Israelitish camp. It is with this element and these various implements that the nations now do hurt to one another; that is, the destruction of battle is chiefly effected by or with artillery.

This prophecy corresponds precisely with the history of those wars which followed the French Revolution.

In many of the battles fought by the allied army and the French, as many as two hundred *pieces of artillery* were employed; and on both sides of this great contest this arm of war was multiplied, until it became the chief dependence, and was constantly relied upon wherever it could be brought into position.

I have already remarked that the particular era of each trumpet was to be designated by the historical events that distinguished that age or era. But war, simply and of itself, does not designate any particular age; it has been common to all ages. But the total change in the mode of prosecuting wars, with the newly-invented agents and instruments employed in them, will define the period of time alluded to in the prophecy.

In these prophetic descriptions of the wars that broke out of the French Revolution and spread over Europe, and rolled their waves even into Egypt and Syria, the age of *gunpowder*, and the various descriptions of firearms consequent upon the discovery of this element of war, is made very conspicuous; and the splendid array of military order and movement show that the practice of war had become reduced to scientific laws. We are to look, then, for the era of the 5th and 6th trumpets, when the history of the world presents facts corresponding with the particular descriptions of this prophecy.

The prophetic allusion to this power, distinguished by the combined action of the four angels, or the four principal powers of Europe, is remarkable for its brevity. The prophet just sketches its vast extent, its brilliant array, the means it employs, then leaves it with simply telling us: "By "them were the third part of men killed." But embodied in this brief sketch is to be found the operations and the triumph of the Grand Allied Army of Europe, which overthrew the French Empire and put an end to the Napoleon dynasty.

The great purpose in the appointment of this confederation was to restore peace to Europe, and to drive home to its own territorial limit the ambitious power which had

overthrown the kingdoms of the greater part of that continent. Killing this power, and not killing men, was the appointed object of the Alliance. England, Russia, Austria and Prussia, formed the grand prophetic alliance. These were inferior powers whose feeble efforts when added to the giant arm of the coalition rendered some service. And Turkey too, very late in the day of this great conflict, and when her sullen silence was broken by the sting of the scorpion, contributed her keen cimeters and her terrible cavalry in bringing about the desired results. But this last power only fought in defence of its own territory, but fought most desperately within those limits.

The object of this work is not to recite history, but to direct the attention of the reader to those prominent points in the current of its events which correspond with the features of prophecy. I shall not follow the hostile powers in their bloody conflicts in Spain and Portugal, in the Germanic circles and in Italy, nor shall I follow the bold and daring march of Napoleon into the heart of Russia, when her cities fell before him as the caravans fall before the sirocco of the desert.

The conquest of Moscow crowned his triumphant march into Russia, and the voluntary conflagration of that city set on fire the funeral pile of his stupendous power.

This expedition brought a temporary ruin upon the conqueror of Europe, and gave the tide of his fortune a downward course. By the burning of Moscow, his army of half a million was thrown out upon the bleak plains of Russia under a winter sky, without shelter or defence against its rigors, to make them retreat in the best way they could, through a wild and boundless desert of snow.

The enraged Russians rushed upon the disheartened and perishing columns ; but the snow, through which they plunged with the utmost difficulty, and the piercing cold—freezing the very blood in their veins—left but little for the Russians to do, but to deny them the death which the destitute and

freezing wretches begged at the hands of their enemies. Having thrown away their arms as a useless encumbrance, they had no means left them of putting an end to the horrors of a life now a thousand fold more to be dreaded than death. Dogs, horses, and every sort of carcase that could be laid hold of were greedily devoured by these famishing and freezing men.

These were the men who had made Europe tremble under the storm of battle ; but they now presented a spectacle of wretchedness and suffering, which moved the sympathy, and drew the tear of sorrow from the eyes of their stoutest foes.

The incidents of this retreat present a literal correspondence with that part of the prophecy contained in the 6th verse—" And in those days shall men seek death and shall " not find it, and shall desire to die and death shall flee from " them." Although, I do not think these incidents were alluded to by the Prophet.

The disastrous results of the Russian campaign emboldened many of Napoleon's allies to forsake him, and finding himself unable to retrieve his fortunes, he was forced to the humiliating alternative of abdicating his imperial authority and retiring to the island of Elba. His exile afforded the first interval of rest from the bloody scenes of war that Europe had experienced for a long while :—a pause that gave the people a season for reflection, and an opportunity of contrasting the scenes of peace and quietness with the turbulence and horrors of war.

But a year had hardly elapsed before the prisoner of Elba, to the astonishment of the world, once more stood in the midst of France, and was borne to his capital and his throne again amidst the acclamations of his enthusiastic soldiers, who beheld with inexpressible delight the return of their great commander. *Virè le Empereur* rang through France, and confounded Europe with astonishment.

The allies rejected all offers to negotiate with the restored emperor, and resolved to renew the war.

France, now without allies, had to rest her efforts upon her own strength, and her army was organized, equipped and prepared for the field with incredible dispatch.

Napoleon, in order to cover France, threw his columns out upon Belgium. Wellington and Blucher took ground in advance of Brussels, and the space between the two armies became the theater of a desperate and final conflict.

Napoleon had not the men to spare that are usually thrown away in the preliminary ons and offs of a great battle, and the allies were equally determined to make every blow they struck available.

Two or three days were spent in mutual efforts to dislodge each other from the most commanding positions. Those efforts displayed the perfection of military skill and deeds of the most daring bravery. All Europe was looking on with breathless anxiety, as if conscious that her fate hung upon the event of this struggle. The memorable 18th of June brought the hostile forces to a general engagement.

To turn the right or the left, or to force the center of the other, was the effort of each side. Napoleon, with his best troops, faced Wellington, with the English and some allies, while Grouchy, with the remaining forces of the French army, sharply engaged the Prussians under Blucher, to prevent him from forming a junction with Wellington.

As the day declined, the fury of the combat increased. Clouds of dense, dark smoke rolled up from the extended ranks of infantry and the incessant explosions of artillery, and hung over the battle-field, like a dismal curtain, to hide the horrid scenes of earth from the eye of heaven. The very ground trembled under the hoofs of squadrons of heavy cavalry as they furiously charged the firm squares of infantry. The French Guards, who were always reserved for an occasion of great emergency, were seen to leave their position near the emperor, and come into line. Officers, bearing the orders of the commanders, flew with increased swiftness from the centre to the wings, and from the wings to the centre. From some acci-

dent the French Guards were thrown into a slight disorder. England's chieftain* instantly perceived the moment of his advantage, and shouting to his men to seize the victory, they plunged into the lines of the enemy. Sheets of fire and masses of cavalry broke upon the lines of the French; they staggered under the tremendous shock, and reeled and fell. It was all over: everywhere their broken and shattered columns gave way, and the scorpion power of Europe found its grave on the field of Waterloo!

Those events, severe and trying as they were, failed to produce an entire religious change in the kingdoms of Europe, although the hand of God was so distinctly seen in the affairs of men. *The men which were not killed by these plagues*—that is, the kingdoms that had been subdued by France, but were now restored to their former independent sovereignty, and the powers of continental Europe generally, including France, remained incorrigibly devoted to their old and delusive systems of religion—*worshipping demons, and idols of gold and silver, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk.*

There is no difficulty in determining what religion this is. Every one knows that the *Protestant* religion has no such objects of worship.

Neither was the political morality of these kingdoms entirely improved; though, to a great extent, both the political and religious state of Europe is now in a much better position. *They repented not of their sorceries, their fornication, nor their thefts*—verse 20, 21. There still remained in those governments the old spirit of hatred, ambition, rivalry, and envy; seeking by chicanery and every artful intrigue in diplomacy, or by superior force, to possess themselves of advantages and wealth at the expense of the proper rights of others. Hereditary governments of the old despotic form, from long-settled maxims and familiar practice, are hard to change. The throne of despotic government will be the last to relinquish its hold

* Wellington.

upon power and oppression. Even after the sentiments and opinions of *the people* have become radically changed, the throne, like a stern mastiff, continues to growl over the bone of its despotic power upon every fresh attempt to disturb or remove it.

Notwithstanding the obstinate adherence of despotic power to its old and favorite doctrines of irresponsible dominion, we shall see in the chapter next to be commented upon, that the *people*—the masses—had undergone a very decided change in their views on the subject of both their political and religious rights. The people asked for one thing, and the throne gave them quite another thing. The throne proclaimed its power !—the people demanded a constitution. This is precisely the picture of Europe ever since the death of the French Empire; and it is pointed to and explained by the speech of the Emperor of Austria to the Hungarian Diet, already referred to.

The question will probably suggest itself to some minds—if the scorpion power of Europe was so useful in improving the condition of the people in the change and overthrow of their governments, why should another power have been raised up and appointed to destroy *it* ? In answering this question, I say, there is no greater truth in the philosophy of human government, than that a system of government which is indispensably necessary to the condition of the people in one age of the world, may become decidedly injurious and inapplicable to their state in another age, under a different state of the public mind, and a higher degree of moral and political improvement. Certainly no one could imagine that the relentless despotism requisite to the government of men in a savage state, would be adapted to those men when in a state of civilization and moral improvement.

Right government is the illustration of the public mind and will, and every change in the government, where the people are heard, implies an improved condition of the people. It is morally impossible to keep the human mind

always in one state ; its nature, no less than its destiny, forces it on ; progression, onward and upward, are the evidences of its restless and upreaching powers; and the government that attempts to suppress this natural energy of man, inevitably brings upon itself rebellion and revolution.

England is an illustration of the harmonious action of the government and the people. Her government has kept pace with the continually improving condition of her people. Every new development of political science has been met by corresponding measures of increased liberality in the government ; and where is there a nation so powerful, prosperous and happy as the English nation ? I speak of the European governments, because it is in Europe, where this great political axiom is battling against the prejudices of antiquated error. The remarks made in relation to England are, for the same reasons, equally applicable to these United States.

Now, if this scorpion power had remained in the ascendency to which it had risen, monopolizing and controlling the power of the greater part of Europe, its innate lust of dominion would have defeated the great political advantages which incidentally grew out of its extraordinary achievements. It aroused the public mind, and opened the eyes of the people to a view of their own power and rights, without aiming to produce such a result ; and if it had continued in the possession of its unbounded dominion, after conquering the thrones of Europe, it would have turned upon the people, and bound their aspiring spirits in chains of despotism, and put out their eyes, that they might no longer behold those rights and liberties which had been brought to their view by the scorpion power itself. It was to prevent this reaction against the improvement of the civil and religious condition of Europe that the four angels were appointed to destroy this power.

There is one fact in relation to these four angels which should be noticed here, which goes to show that they are the identical four powers seen by the prophet, in the first

verse of the 7th chapter, standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor any tree. It is said in the second verse of the same chapter, that an angel cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea! This expression, to whom it *was given*, undoubtedly means—*had been given.* There is no where in the Revelations any allusion to four angels to whom such power was given, but those who were appointed to destroy the scorpion empire; they are therefore identical with the angels appointed to keep the winds from blowing. And history informs us that these four powers, after they had overthrown the French empire, and driven its name and its authority out of Europe, then formed the *Holy Alliance*, for the purpose of treading out the fires of war and preserving the peace of Europe. In this character they are fully described in connection with the 6th Seal. In that office they are referred to here again, merely to show that the four angels in the two instances are the identical four political powers named in history.

The ninth chapter of the Revelations is inexplicable without the French Revolution and the scenes that followed it. No one who ever attempted to explain this chapter before that occurrence could give any consistent and rational explanation of it. The design and import of its sublime scenery, with its military power and grandeur, were beyond the reach of all human conjecture until the French Revolution, then the republic, and finally the empire, furnished the explanation.

The principal writers on the prophecies have fancied that the Arabs and the Turks illustrate this chapter; but they utterly fail in their attempt to show any consistent connection between the chapter and the Mohammedan power under any aspect.

And to a thoughtful observer it is quite as impossible to read the history of that revolution attentively, without seeing

that it must have been the very subject that was in the prophet's eye when he sketched this portion of his vision.

Mr. Croly, who published his book on the Apocalypse some ten years after the overthrow of the Napoleon dynasty, saw at once the correspondence between the history of France in that terrible day of her trial, and the ninth chapter of the Revelation. He also saw, what is quite as clear as any other part of the prophecy, the true explanation of the four angels appointed for a day, a month, and a year, and many other features in the chapter. I have already referred to his work, and presented some extracts from it, and I shall have occasion to make other quotations from his forcible and eloquent pen.

I mentioned in the beginning of my remarks upon the historical illustration of the ninth chapter of the Revelation, that it contained only the *political* features of the prophecy, and that we should find the *religious* aspect of it in a subsequent chapter—that is, in the eleventh chapter. It is impossible to disguise the immediate connection between the circumstances of the ninth and of the eleventh chapters ; and yet the tenth chapter, having no sort of relation to either, is placed just between the two. I therefore pass over the tenth chapter for the present, and resume the historical incidents of the French Revolution, for the purpose of exhibiting its religious aspect, as disclosed in the eleventh chapter.

CHAPTER XI.

1. *And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.*

2. *But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.*

3. *And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophecy a thousand two hundred and three score days clothed in sackcloth.*

4. *These are the two olive trees and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.*

5. *And if any man will hurt them fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies; and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.*

6. *These have power to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will.*

7. *And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.*

8. *And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.*

9. *And they of the people and kindred and tongues and nations, shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.*

10. *And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them,*

and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another, because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

11. *And after three days and a half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet, and great fear fell upon them which saw them.*

12. *And they heard a great voice from heaven, saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.*

13. *And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.*

14. *The second wo is past: and behold the third wo cometh quickly.*

The direction given by the angel to the prophet, to make this measurement of the temple and altar of God, and them that worship therein, is not to be regarded as a geographical mapping out of a given part of the earth. What we are to understand from it is, that Christendom is as much under the eye and protecting providence of God as a man's farm, laid out and defined by limits and bounds, is under his own sight and protection. This view of the text is supported by the direction to measure *them that worship therein!*—it is tantamount to saying—God knoweth them that are his. Therefore we may settle this as a principle of our faith, that, however ill the two witnesses may be treated; however much the temple and the altar of God, meaning the religion and worship taught by these two witnesses, may be insulted, profaned and desecrated, it is all under the eye of God,—all known to him. And as his providence overrules the turbulence of his enemies, so that He maketh the wrath of man to praise him, so his righteous judgment holds the perpetrators of such deeds to a strict account.

The prophet must have been greatly surprised when he was told not to embrace the holy city in his measurement;

for the reason that the temple of God and the altar were no longer there. The holy city was given to the Gentiles to be trodden under foot, forty and two months! His beloved city, Jerusalem! where he had leaned upon his Lord's bosom, and where he had witnessed the stupendous miracles of his life and the tragic scenes of his death, must not be embraced within the measured limits. Even Jerusalem—the holy city! once watered by tears of divine compassion, was to be given to the Gentiles to be trodden under foot! O! sad reverse. But this is the inexorable law of the Divine Government. When a people trample upon the light which God gives them to walk by, and choose to follow the delusive light of their own corrupt minds, they will inevitably meet with the unhappy fate of Jerusalem;—they will be cast out of the limits of God's favor, and will be trodden down by calamity, in one form or another.

The two witnesses are the prominent subjects of this first division of the chapter; they are to prophecy twelve hundred and sixty days, in sack-cloth; that is in a state of obstruction and depression. Various opinions have been entertained respecting this period of time; and much labor has been employed to show when it commenced and the period of its termination. I believe that, in the present instance, it simply means that state of the Church from the first step of her apostacy till the recovery of Christianity by the Reformation.

During this period of religious darkness, the Bible was unknown to the people, copies of it being very rare and seldom found, except in the hands of monks. The voice of the two witnesses, the new and the old testament, was seldom heard; the decrees of councils and the rescript of popes smothered the voice of the witnesses, and placed them in the secluded and depressed condition implied by their prophesying in sack-cloth.

Very soon after the Church found herself at the head of the Roman Empire, the worldly wisdom and pride of her

Bishops began to decide questions of vital interest to religion, not by the Word of God, but by councils and synods, speaking only the wisdom of men. This was the beginning of the twelve hundred and sixty days of the sack-cloth state of the two witnesses.

The qualities of the two witnesses are set forth under the figure of the *olive tree* and the *candlestick*. The first expressing the idea of their healing efficacy, in a spiritual sense ; as the olive oil was used to anoint the sick, to assuage the pain of the patient and to restore him to health ; also, as giving *light*, the candlestick being the familiar Scriptural emblem of spiritual light.

But this neglect and depression of the two witnesses does not at all alter their character, nor change their position in the appointment of their divine Author. They are ever standing before the God of the earth, and whatever else men may substitute for them, the Almighty will allow of no other interpretation of his will and his law than that which is given by these two witnesses.

This is most distinctly declared in describing their retributive powers—" If any man will *hurt* them *fire* proceedeth out " of their mouth and devoureth their enemies ;" and to make this the more emphatic, it is repeated—" And if any man " will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed."

The hurt that men may do these witnesses is the setting up a false system of religion ; uttering spurious doctrines, and teaching a superstitious faith, and claiming for their foundation the Word of God ! All such false teachers and corrupt deceivers will suffer the judgments which are denounced by these witnesses against their enemies.

The power ascribed to the witnesses to shut heaven that it rain not, and to turn the waters to blood and to smite the earth with all plagues, is but an amplification of their denunciations against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who, in respect to religious matters, hold the truth in unrighteousness ; and obstruct the progress of the religion

of Christ in the earth by withholding the Word of God from the people, and refusing them the light and instruction of the two witnesses.

The prophet proceeds to give an example in which the witnesses were killed by a power that made war against them. This is a treatment which far exceeds the obstructions and hindrances that caused them to prophesy in sackcloth. This was a daring act of national infidelity, boldly denouncing both the existence of God and the veracity of the Bible.

7. *And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit, shall make war against them and shall overcome them and kill them.*

The meaning of the first clause of the verse must be, that the witnesses finished their testimony under the peculiar oppression which had beset them for a very long period of their prophesying, and that now they were enlarged in their liberty, and more generally emancipated from the control of their enemies. This construction of that part of the verse is necessary to the harmony of the whole subject, and besides it is consistent with history.

The reason for killing these witnesses is given in the tenth verse : *Because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth*—the term prophet, or teacher, and witness, are synonymous.

If their testimony was finished and at an end, the cause of torment to them that dwelt on the earth would have ceased also, and there would have been no inducement to kill the witnesses. We must suppose, then, that allusion is had to the enlarged circulation of the Bible which took place quite early after the days of Luther. The Scriptures were no longer bound by popish restriction in Germany, in England, in Switzerland, and even in France.

Charles the V. had utterly failed to conquer Protestantism in Germany, and his efforts to keep the Bible out of the hands of the people ended in the religious pacification—or,

in other words, the peace of Nassau. This treaty secured the Protestants all through the great empire of Germany in the right to the free exercise of their religion—the free and unrestricted use of the Scriptures amongst the people. In Protestant Switzerland the cause in which the noble Zwinglius and his heroic Protestant brethren became martyrs, secured, by its triumph over papal dominion, the free use of the Scriptures. In England and Scotland, too, the Bible was free for all, and the civil law protected every man in the liberty of reading it and obeying its precepts. This was all in the sixteenth century ; and singular enough, in the same century, France, too, by the edict of Nantes, secured to Protestantism the same free unrestricted use of the Bible ! So that over a considerable portion of Europe, in the seventeenth century, the two witnesses were liberated from their bondage, and no longer prophesied in sackcloth, but stood up boldly, and by the mouth of courageous reformers and their faithful successors, denounced the judgments of God upon the wickedness of all men of every condition and rank in society, and warned the upholders of a corrupt and idolatrous religion to forsake their superstition and idolatry, if they would escape the wrath of God, revealed from heaven against all who held the truth in unrighteousness !

In this way they tormented them that dwelt on the earth, as stated in the 10th verse, and drew upon themselves the vengeance of the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit, who made war upon them, and overcame them, and killed them !

Who killed these witnesses ? France killed them ! Look at her in 1794. There she stands, a ghastly monster of iniquity, with the atheistical crime burnt in her forehead by the scorching finger of prophecy and the records of her own terrible history.

And when the malice of their murderers had glutted itself in acts of barbarity upon the life of two witnesses, their dead bodies were treated with the contempt of being denied the

rights of sepulture ! They must not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves ; but the maddened votaries of Atheism rejoiced over them and made merry, and sent gifts of congratulation to one another, to testify their joy that these two *prophets* which had *tormented* them were now dead !

And their dead bodies were not laid away in some retired place, but were exposed in the public street of the great city, which is, *spiritually*, called Sodom and Egypt, and where our Lord was crucified. And the spectacle of their dead bodies was seen by the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations, for *three days and a half !*

The circumstances which explain the killing of the two witnesses may be very briefly stated : they are a part of the history of the French Convention of 1794. The common and well-known history of that event is this : " Gobet, constitu-" tional Bishop of Paris, was brought forward to play the prin-" cipal part in the most impudent and scandalous farce ever " acted in the face of a national representation." It is true, the bishop performed this task reluctantly, and it is said with tears. He was brought forward in full procession to declare to the convention that the religion which he had taught so many years was in every respect a piece of priestcraft, which had no foundation either in history or sacred truth ! He disowned, in solemn and explicit terms, the existence of the Deity to whose worship he had been consecrated ! He then laid on the table his episcopal decorations, and received a fraternal embrace from the president of the convention. Several apostate priests followed his example. Processions entered the convention travestied in priestly garments, and singing the most profane hymns. The world for the first time heard an assembly of men, born and educated in civilization, and assuming the right to govern one of the finest of the European nations, uplift their united voice to deny the most solemn truth which man's soul receives, and renounce, *unanimously*, the belief and worship of a Deity. " This impious and " ridiculous mummery had a certain fashion, and the installa-

"tion of the Goddess of Reason was renewed and initiated "throughout the nation. The churches were, in most dis- "tricts of France, closed against priests and worshippers; the "bells were broken and cast into cannon, the whole ecclesi- "astical establishment was destroyed, and the republican in- "scription was placed over the cemeteries, declaring death "to be a perpetual sleep."*

These acts of the French Convention give the lie to Revelation, and kill all authority and influence of the scriptures!

These are sins, not to be charged upon Popery; the Romish Church suffered in common with the Protestant religion, from this outbreak of Atheism. The hands of this diabolical authority were laid upon her with the greatest violence, and she was torn to pieces by its remorseless fury. The witnesses were killed by the *beast!* not by the Church; by the beast, that ascended out of the bottomless pit! the wild, ferocious form of government assumed by the French nation after it came out of the anarchy and blood of its Revolution.

The prophet has to do only with acts of high authority; such as give form and feature to the nation of which he speaks; the mere acts of lawless violence perpetrated by mobs, unless they impress themselves upon the feelings and acts of the nation, are not noticed in the lofty tones of his announcements. There were many instances throughout France, going to show the hatred and contempt of the people for these witnesses, whose reproving and warning voice had tormented them; but these were all inferior to the acts of the National Convention. In the city of Lyons, for example, this hatred was testified by dragging the Bible through the streets tied to the tail of an ass!

The heinous affront offered to Heaven by the French Convention, was not a solitary act of the nation, which, when passed, was done with and laid aside amongst the archives

* Russell's Modern Europe.

of their legislation ; but it was reiterated in every form in which the frenzy of the nation could make known its contempt of God and its abhorrence of religion! These repeated acts of blasphemy drew upon this insane nation the eyes of all Christendom ; and the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations shuddered with horror, as they beheld the wild delirium and madness of the French people. Thus, they "saw the dead bodies of the two witnesses lie in the "street of the great city three days and a half." And the general exultation over the dead witnesses is expressed by the people sending gifts of congratulation to one another, because the two prophets that tormented them were now dead!

A striking instance of this insane merry-making was witnessed in the act of the Convention, by which the sacredness of the marriage obligation was reduced to a simple *civil contract*, which the parties might annul at their pleasure ; thus loosening the strongest bonds of society, and abolishing this safeguard of public morality.

In short the madness of this Atheistic power struck at everything that honored God and exalted man; at everything that restrained vice and protected virtue. The greatest indulgence was given to the worst appetites and passions of men, and the only laws known amongst the people seemed to be those which destroyed morality and cherished vice!

It is said that the dead bodies of the two witnesses lay in the *street of the great city!* What does the prophet mean by the great city? This is an important inquiry and demands serious attention.

It is altogether improbable that the words *city* and *street* are to be received in a literal sense; the whole narrative would become an absurdity if these terms were so regarded. A city that is set upon a hill, is the symbol which Christ himself employs to illustrate the Church. And the same figure is used by the prophet—"And I, John, saw the *holy city*, new "Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven." Rev. 21 : 2. From these passages it is manifest that we

are to understand him to mean a *church* when he speaks of a city. The great city then must signify a great church.

The only church to which the term great could be applied at the time he alludes to, was the Church of Rome. Her dominion over the kings of the earth, and the universality of her doctrines in former ages, entitle her to the distinctive appellation of *great;* that is a church exercising power and authority in an eminent degree.

Presuming this to be a fair interpretation of the prophet's meaning, we are now to inquire what he means by the *street* of the great city.

In all cities of any note there will always be found, one street more distinguished than the rest for its business and animation, or its superior style of building, its show and parade of finery: this would be styled emphatically, and by way of eminence, *the street.* Such a street is usually the place of great resort, show, and display, and the principal place of business too.

Now, of all the kingdoms over which this great city reigned, there was not one that so fully came up to this description of *the street* as France did. She was the most animated, the most showy, the most frequented of all the streets or kingdoms of this great city. She has been pre-eminently the street of fashion, and the resort of strangers and travellers for centuries. It was by this general resort of the gay and fashionable, as well as people called thither by business, that the people, and kindreds, and tongues and nations, saw the dead bodies of the two witnesses lying in this street of the great city!

The prophet gives us, in a very concise and brief manner, the moral physiognomy of this great city, in order that a true estimate may be made of its internal character. The first of those features is *Sodom*, the second is *Egypt*, and the third is, where also our Lord was crucified. As if he felt reluctant to speak of his own country in connection with those already named, he modestly declines naming it, and

merely alludes to it, by mentioning a circumstance from which all the world would at once know what people he meant. He tells us that these principal features of the great city are to be interpreted *spiritually!* The moral principles, the predominant passions of the three nations he has named, as they are given in their history, must be looked to as furnishing a true picture of the moral and spiritual character of the great city.

The Sodomites are proverbial for their wickedness. The memorial of their peculiar vice is seen in the stern denouncement of the civil law of most Christian nations.

In the history which introduces these people to our notice, they are represented as violating those laws of hospitality so generally observed and reverenced by the eastern nations, in order to gratify their vicious propensities. Their predominant characteristic is that of great impurity.

But the particular vice of the Sodomites is not the thing to be looked for in this illustration of the great city. The prophet means, by his reference to those abandoned people, to say, that the wickedness found in the great city was equal in enormity to that which had been seen in Sodom, although it was of a very different species of crime. While the sin of the latter was shocking to every refined feeling of humanity, that of the former was equally revolting to enlightened Christian sensibility.

A Church that confounds all distinction between the world and itself, by holding in its bosom, as members, men whose lives are corrupt and vicious to the last degree, certainly exhibits an anomaly in Christianity ; but when by its highest authority it sanctions, authorizes, and *invites* the practice of the most flagitious crimes, it perpetrates before the world an enormity that measures up fully to the extent of the crime of the Sodomites. The sale of indulgences, by which any one could purchase with money the right to commit whatever sin he might desire to perpetrate, is, no doubt, the point of resemblance between the great city and ancient Sodom.

The next feature is that of Egypt. Egypt can be the symbol of nothing but oppression and cruelty. The history of God's people in that country bears upon its face lineaments of the most striking resemblance to the cruelties and the oppression which Protestantism, in different countries and at different times, received at the hands of Popery.

A lively picture of the sufferings of the children of Israel is given in the first chapter of Exodus. The hard task-masters appointed over them to exact the full amount of their severe labors ; the cruel resort to prevent the increase of the people by *murdering* all their male infants, is a melancholy history of the despotism and barbarity of the Pharaohs.

These people were no less afflicted in their minds than they were oppressed by their bodily labors. They cried to God, long before Moses and Aaron appeared in Egypt, to secure their deliverance. The Hebrews had not outlived the impressions of the patriarchal religion, and the images and the idols that were everywhere set up over the whole land were hateful in their eyes, and it is more than probable that the cruelty of the task-masters was aggravated by their refusal to join in the idolatrous worship of the country.

Protestantism in its early days encountered at the hands of Popery an equal amount of cruelty and oppression. The persecutions and destruction of the Albigenses, the fires of Smithfield, the rack and torture of the Inquisition, the massacre of St. Bartholomew, and the oppression and ruin of the Huguenots, place the great city upon an equality with Egypt in cruelty and despotism. The last feature named by the prophet is his own countrymen, the Jews ; but, as before stated, he does not give their national designation, probably for the reasons suggested.

The chief peculiarity of the Jews as a religious people, was the unyielding bigotry with which they laid claim to the *exclusive right* to Divine favor. They would not allow that any other nation should share with them this inestimable blessing. Degrading epithets, such as "dogs," expressed the religious

contempt in which they held other people. "Away with "such a fellow from the earth, for it is not fit that he should "live!" was the exclamation of the multitude when Paul declared his mission to the Gentiles.

This bigotry led them to acts of malicious persecution against the disciples and the apostles, who ventured to show them that the Gentiles were also embraced in the gospel provision. Everybody knows what a furious bigot Saul of Tarsus was up to the very hour of his conversion—haling men and women, and committing them to prison for embracing the doctrines of Christ! The apostles were pursued into Gentile cities by these relentless bigots, who threw every sort of obstacle and hindrance in their way to defeat the preaching of the Gospel. It was these bitter enemies to the religion of Christ who followed the Apostles into the different cities, and by false representations and malicious falsehoods, had them arrested and brought before heathen governors, and often thrown into prison, *where our Lord was also crucified*, the prophet says. This only act mentioned by him was the crowning work—the climax of their bigotry. *Blindness in part hath happened unto them*, and they verily thought they were doing God's will.

The exclusive claims to divine appointment set up by the great city, or the Romish Church, is a well known fact in the history of that church. The entire exclusion of all other people from the benefits of Christianity and the kingdom of Heaven, distinguishes her selfish bigotry and the active and unremitting energies employed by her to subdue and silence the preachers of the Reformation, afford a perfect counterpart to the persecuting efforts of the Jews to stop the early preachers of the Gospel from proclaiming salvation to all men.

The prophet, as I have remarked, mentions only one act of his countrymen's bigotry, but this one act is intended to illustrate the violence and the blindness of their religious pre-

judices against all other religions, while at the same time it furnishes a strong point of resemblance to the great city.

In the great city our Lord is *spiritually* crucified by the substitution of some other mediatorial power! The Virgin and Saints are allowed to take the place of Christ!—and the power of remitting or retaining sins is held to be in the hands of the Pope and the priesthood. The sale of indulgences places this fact beyond dispute. One of two points must be conceded: either the Pope claims to have the power of forgiving sins, or the sale of indulgences was a deliberate and horrible fraud practiced upon the people!

By this assumption of a divine power by the Popes, our Lord also was crucified in the great city.

We now return to the two witnesses. We left them lying in the street of the great city, where, the prophet says, their dead bodies should be seen three days and a half.

It seems to be universally conceded that a prophetic day is to be considered as a year, a day for a year; this would make the time the witnesses were to continue in a dead state, three years and six months. *And after three days and a half, the Spirit of Life from God entered into them.* We shall see with what wonderful exactness this prediction was verified by the French Council of Five Hundred.

November of 1793 was the memorable period of the killing of the two witnesses, and of the wild exultation which expressed the joy of the nation over the death of those two prophets which had tormented them. In three years and a half the mind of this fickle nation was totally changed, and they became as enthusiastic in *establishing* and *protecting* religion, as they had formerly been in destroying it! In June, 1797, in the Council of Five Hundred, the report on the "Revision of the laws relative to religious worship," was brought up, and the following provisions were adopted, viz:—

1. That all citizens might buy, or hire edifices for the free exercise of religious worship.

2. That all congregations might assemble by the sound of bells.

3. That no test or promise of any sort unrequired from other citizens, should be required of the ministers of those congregations.

4. That any individual attempting to impede, or in any way interrupt, the public worship, should be fined up to 500 livres, &c.

5. That entrance to assemblies for the purpose of religious worship should be free for all citizens.

6. That all other laws concerning religious worship should be repealed.

Thus, in three years and a half from the time they were slain, the two witnesses rose up and stood upon their feet!

But, that we may not suppose the interests of Christianity were left to the whim and caprice of this nation, the prophet tells us that this resuscitation was produced by the Spirit of Life from God! His overruling providence turned the heart of the nation, and they saw, with horror, the sacrilege and blasphemy they had committed, and set themselves about correcting the results of their crimes ; *and great fear fell upon them which saw the witnesses restored to life again.* This implies the change of feeling which came over the nation and led to the adoption of these liberal regulations for the government of religious worship.

The prophet not unfrequently declares events which have their fulfillment at different periods, in such close connexion with each other that it would seem as though they occurred at the same time : here is an instance. After stating that the witnesses stood upon their feet again, he immediately adds : *And they heard a great voice from Heaven saying unto them, come up hither ? and they ascended up to Heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them !*

The act of the French Council placed the witnesses upon their feet again in France where they had been slain, but the voice from Heaven was the united act of the Protest-

ant Churches of the different Protestant nations, in establishing Foreign Bible and Missionary Societies, and publishing the Bible in almost all the languages of the earth, and spreading it over the world. This was the great voice from Heaven. This exaltation of the scriptures commenced when the *four angels* became the peace-keepers of Europe, and it has been going on ever since. The witnesses ascended in a cloud: signifying triumph! Their enemies beheld them; looked at them maliciously, in their triumphant state, but had no power to kill or even to hurt them any more. The Protestant Bible now has, generally speaking, free access and circulation amongst the nations of the earth; but at Rome it is still a contraband article.

13. *And the same hour* (that is, within the same period when the witnesses were killed, and the accompanying scenes of blasphemy occurred) *there was a great earthquake*—a figure of speech representing a violent overthrow or downfall. This was exemplified by the overthrow of the French kingdom, and the consequent destruction of the French Church. Both fell, and both were broken into pieces, as a city thrown down by an earthquake.

This is another fact to which the prophet points us, that we may fully understand what particular country he is speaking of.

The next fact to which he calls attention is one of the highest importance, and claims the most serious attention.

If I do not mistake its import, it is designed to show, that the city, or great city, which he has been referring to, *is a Church*, as I have already stated it to be. The prophet says in this earthquake *the tenth part of the city fell!*

This cannot, by any reasonable mode of construction, be made to illustrate a purely political or secular matter. It has been explained by some as meaning that the tenth part of the atheistic empire of France fell. But this will not do. There was no French Empire, such as distinguished the reign and the glory of Napoleon, at the time that this earthquake occurred. The

kingdom of France fell, not only a tenth part of it, but the whole kingdom fell. If it is said that the text has its application when the different kingdoms which had formed the grand empire under Napoleon broke away from his dominion. There is still this difficulty: That could not be called an earthquake; it was an ordinary political transaction—the regular separation of a whole into its different constituent parts, and each part preserving its own separate identity. Still a further difficulty stands in the way of this explanation. If the French Empire is the great city, and the withdrawal of the different associated kingdoms from their connection with it, thereby breaking it up, is intended, the figure is wholly inapplicable.

Instead of the *tenth* part falling off, the prophet should have said, *several* tenth parts fell—at least as many powers as separated from and forsook their alliance with France; so that it is impossible to explain the fall of this tenth part in that way.

If it is said that the tenth part of France fell, meaning that the city of Paris, her proud metropolis, was chiefly involved in the anarchy and earthquake of that period, I answer, that this does not give a satisfactory exposition, because upon no scale of political computation can the great city of Paris be made to take so humble a position in the national consequence as to amount to no more than one-tenth of its greatness. No one will pretend that this is to be understood as a geographical proportion of the country; and if we regard it as implying a political proportion, then it does not represent the true state of the nation. Who does not know that, politically, Paris is *all of France,* instead of a tenth part of it? So that no political or secular explanation of this item in the prophet's description will give us the true meaning of it.

The prophet does not say *a* tenth part of the city fell, but *the* tenth part. Mark that phraseology; it is a very important distinction. The definite article *the* points to a

separate, defined, distinct fact or thing. And what is that thing? I answer, it is *tithe*, the *tenth* part, which in ecclesiastical economy is levied, received, and set apart for the maintenance and support of the clergy or priesthood. It is the pecuniary pillar which chiefly upholds the ecclesiastical establishment.

This tenth part fell! Hear history upon that point:

"It was necessary not only to subsist the revolution, but "also to fill up the immense deficit which retarded its march "and menaced its future designs. There remained only one "means, that of declaring *national property that which was "held by the Church, and selling it for the use of the state!* "We shall presently see how they conducted this grand "operation, which destroyed the ancient ecclesiastical règime.

"One of the most urgent necessities was the abolition of "*tithes.* As it was an impost *paid to the clergy by the in-"habitants of the country, the sacrifice was to turn to the profit "of those who had been crushed by it.*

"The benefices of the clergy amounted to many *thousand "millions of francs!* Talleyrand, Bishop of Austin, proposed "to the clergy to renounce it in favor of the nation, which "would employ it in support of the altars and the payment "of its debt. The clergy struggled against this proposition. "The decree which took from the Church the benefices, and "placed them at the disposal of the government, was passed "December 2, 1789. From that moment the hatred of the "clergy to the *revolution* broke forth."

I need not follow this thread of history any further. These few quotations from Russell's History of Modern Europe, show that the *revolution* was the cause of the loss to the Church of the vast accumulation of its treasures, which had swollen to the enormous amount of thousands of millions of francs, under the system of tithes, or the *tenth part!* The tithes and the benefices were now swept away—*the tenth part of the city fell.* The revolution was the earthquake, and its

pecuniary necessities seized upon the tithes and benefices of the Church, and the pecuniary support of the Church was applied to national purposes!

And in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand. The number *seven* is more frequently used in the Scriptures than any other single number, and it is often used to express an indefinite quantity or number, as in the present case. It is used here in the same sense in which we use the common expressions, a great many, a considerable number.

But it is quite a misapprehension of the prophet to suppose that he means to say that seven thousand men were killed; that is, suffered death *literally.* This is a parallel case to that under the 5th trumpet, where it is said the people *died by reason of the waters being made bitter by the wormwood*: they, from motives of policy, or safety, renounced Christianity and embraced the religion of Mahomet, suffering thereby a moral death.

The prophet in the present case means to inform us that great multitudes of people renounced Christianity, and embraced the Infidel and Atheistic system which came out of the bottomless pit at the time of the earthquake. These slain were not confined to France, but many in other countries became infected with the moral poison, and were slain in like manner. A literal death would require a literal earthquake, a literal city, and the literal killing of some human beings, known amongst men as two living witnesses. Literal interpretations of the Apocalypse will never give us a proper understanding of its meaning. *And the remnant were affrighted and gave glory to the God of Heaven!* Those who were not engulfed in the vortex of Atheism and Infidelity, but firmly held to their religious principles, were grieved and shocked at the scenes of blasphemy which they beheld, and probably declared their convictions publicly that the calamities which had overwhelmed the nation, were the expressions of the righteous anger of Heaven,

brought upon the people by their daring impiety. This was a *remnant*, a small body, and likely to be so in France.

14. *The second wo is past, and behold the third wo cometh quickly.*

The first wo was political. It upheaved the foundations of the thrones of Europe, and broke and scattered the systems of government in which men trusted for their political and social prosperity and happiness.

The second wo struck the great religious institution of Europe; subverting it and despoiling it of its extensive power and its great wealth. It went further; it shook the better institutions of religion, and flung the poison of its Atheism and Infidelity into other countries, and arroused amongst her people a hostility towards the doctrines of a purer Christianity. This effect of the wo was fearfully felt in England, and to some extent in the United States likewise; and in fact, all Protestant countries, more or less, became agitated by the effect of this wo.

The third wo cometh *quickly!* but, when, where, or how, the prophet does not say. He never adverts to the third wo again. Revelation is totally silent about it.

But it is said it cometh *quickly!* There is no reason to suppose that it will differ in its character from the two preceding woes! And as these peculiar inflictions, or national chastisements, originated with France, the most likely place we can look to for their fulfillment is in that country.

France exhibited the third wo, probably, in 1830, about fifteen years after the second wo had closed, in the revolution which again prostrated her monarchy, and banished Charles X. from his country. During the memorable "Three days of July," Paris witnessed, and all France beheld scenes of anarchy and bloodshed very much resembling those of the two woes described by the prophet, although not upon so grand a scale. But the effects of that revolution, in the poignant grief with which it shook the heart of France, might well be called a wo!

France continues to keep up her resemblance to the *Moon*, by the rapid alternations of her government ; revolution succeeding revolution like the different phases of the moon. But in all these transitions she is the Moon in bloody hues, as the prophet saw her.

France, and indeed all Christendom, were ultimately benefitted by these woes. They were severe chastisements ; deep, painful surgical operations. They had to be so, in order to reach the extent of the disease they were intended to eradicate.

The turbulence, obstinacy and pride of nations that disdain the milder instructions of God's mercy, and will not be directed by his word, have to be dealt with in the lessons of his judgments before they can be made to comprehend his goodness.

Great political and moral errors, which exert an evil influence over society, and cherish vicious principles in the people, are the obstacles that nations too often throw in the way of their own happiness and prosperity ; and if when warned by the voice of Providence, and admonished by the teachings of enlightened Christianity, they obstinately adhere to these errors, they may expect that the hand of Divine Judgment will be employed to remove those obstacles. *The earth is full of the goodness of the Lord!* is the language of the Psalmist ; and no nation will be allowed to throw itself across the way of God's purpose of distributing His goodness amongst all the people. The nation that opposes its laws and institutions to the benign and merciful plans of Heaven, assumes a perilous responsibility.

The remaining portion of the chapter is employed in sketching an outline of the amazing scenes of the seventh trumpet era. These are the last scenes of earth's vacillations and transitions. A wonderful change comes over the face of its whole affairs, which is just hinted at in a very general way in the following verses, which conclude the chapter :

THE SEVENTH TRUMPET.

15. *And the seventh angel sounded, and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

16. *And the four and twenty elders which sat before God in their seats, fell upon their faces and worshipped God,*

17. *Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art and wast and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.*

18. *And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints and them that fear thy name, small and great, and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.*

19. *And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.*

The above verses afford a synopsis of the grand events which will occupy the attention and excite the wonder of the seventh trumpet age.

There are four leading subjects named by the prophet in his general outline; but there are no details—no description of the particular circumstances which are to fill up this outline. These will be found amongst the chapters that are yet to be considered.

The first of these four prominent subjects is the general spread and establishment of Christianity in the whole earth. *The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ: and he shall reign for ever and ever.* By this we learn that the force and influence of Christianity will become universal, the governments of the world will be based upon the truth of the Christian religion, and kings will exercise their authority in conformity with its righteous laws.

There are a great many allusions to the happy and peaceful state of the world even in the Old Testament prophets, who looked far beyond the shadowy and typical ceremonials of their time, and beheld this future day, *which kings and prophets longed to see*, literally, *but died without the sight.* The New Testament Scriptures abound in these allusions, and breathe the very fragrance of that second paradise.

This change in the civil governments of the world will appear most glorious when we contrast it with the past ages of despotism, when men lived and breathed only by permission of their tyrannical rulers, and when the sword, the rack, and the fire of religious despotism, hunted down and exterminated every appearance of religious liberty.

The second prominent subject under this trumpet is the restoration of the Jews, when they shall be gathered out of all lands and brought to their ancient possessions. But this subject will claim our attention in its appropriate place, under the sixth vial!

The four-and-twenty Elders represent these ancient people of God. The peculiar organization of the Priesthood, which divided it into four-and-twenty courses, was the act of the king himself. For the purpose of better order, and the more convenient ministration of the religious offices of the nation, David made this appointment. 1 Chron.: 24 chap.

Those Priests were styled Governors of the House of God! how suitable it is, that they should, on the occasion before us, represent the Jewish nation. There is a significance in every word and phrase uttered by the prophet. These four and twenty Elders, synonimous with Priests, are said to be seated *before God!* The idea is, that they, the Jewish people, have always been before Him, they had never passed from the eye of His mercy, which was so solemnly pledged to them in the great Abrahamic Covenant; they were still before Him while they were scattered amongst the nations, and trampled under foot by the Heathen.

Under this trumpet they are restored; the Elders fall

upon their faces and worship God: they acknowledge the righteousness, the wisdom and majesty of God in all that He had done with their nation:—*Thou hast taken to thee thy great power and hast reigned!* righteously even in giving us over to the anger of the nations. Was there ever a people upon the earth so distressingly acquainted with the anger of the nations as the Jews have been? Unkindness, malicious cruelty, and hard-heartedness in every form have been wrung out to them to the very dregs.

Even the more enlightened kingdoms of the world have heaped civil disabilities and vexatious regulations upon them, as if they could not be too much oppressed; and everywhere they have been regarded, in the popular feeling, and treated as the refuse and off-scouring of mankind. It is the Jewish nation and church of former days, existing now only in their scattered and oppressed descendants, who are, speaking in the 17th and 18th verses, through their representatives, the four-and-twenty Elders. They refer to their ancient prophets, who foretold that God would, in the last days, visit his people, and set up again the tabernacle of Jacob, and would rebuke the Heathen, and bring his people out of all lands whither he had scattered them. The phraseology of the text is peculiar. It may be simplified thus: And the nations, amongst whom we have been driven out have exercised their anger upon us; but now thy wrath is come, and it will be turned upon our oppressors; and the time of the dead that they should be judged.

Two questions arise just here: who are meant by the dead? and in what manner are they judged? These questions are of a very important character, inasmuch as the opinion is entertained that a resurrection of the dead, and a future judgment of the human race, are intended by the language of the 18th verse.

I differ entirely with those who hold such an opinion. The text, instead of establishing that doctrine; instead of comprehending in its terms the whole family of Adam, is local

in its meaning, and is intended to have no application but to the *Jews!*

It must not be forgotten that this is the language of the Jewish Church, uttered by her constituted head—the four-and-twenty Elders. Many errors have arisen by literalising the language of Scripture too much.

In answer to the first question, I say, that the term *dead*, used in the text, is to be taken *figuratively*. It can hardly be necessary to quote Scripture to show that the word is so used. There is nothing more common in the Old and New Testament, than the figurative or metaphorical use of this word. For instance :—*Now if ye be dead with Christ we shall also live with him. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin.* Rom. 6. *For I, through the law, am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.* Gal. 2. *And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.* 2 Chron. 1. These are only a few instances out of a great many, going to show that the term dead has a signification quite different from that of the death of the body.

In no instance, perhaps, in the history of man, is there another case to be found to which the figurative expression of *dead* is so applicable as it is to the Jews.

Death is the extinction of life once enjoyed. And was there ever a nation whose civil and religious life was so distinguished by the direct interposition and mercy of Heaven as that of the Jews ? In the extraordinary gifts of God, they stood before the world pre-eminent, the wonder and the praise of the whole earth !

Contrast the state of their former glory with their condition ever since the destruction of their city and overthrow of their national and ecclesiastical polity, and will not every one say, they are *dead* ? They have no civil life ; no government ; they have no political life, they are denied any participation in the government of the nations amongst whom they are scattered. In these respects they are but a dead carcase upon which the voracious birds constantly prey.

Their wealth, their substance is seized upon and given to other people, and they have no power to prevent it. *They are dead!*

In the Epistle to the Romans, where the Apostle is speaking of the restoration of his countrymen, he says—*For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead!* This introduces the second question—In what manner will these dead be judged?

The meaning of the term judged, or judgment, is to be determined by the connexion in which it may be employed, and the subject to which it is applied. The instances of its various signification are very numerous, but I shall adduce only two, and these are from the writings of the Jewish Prophets, and refer to cases very analogous to the condition of the Jews.

The Lord is our Judge: the Lord is our Law-giver: the Lord is our king: He will save us. Isaiah 33.

A father of the Fatherless, and a Judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation. Psalm 68.

The idea of the judge in these instances, is clearly one who vindicates the cause of the distressed, and who delivers the oppressed out of the hand of the oppressor, who shields and defends the needy and the destitute. And the announcement of the four and twenty elders is, that the time predicted by their own prophets has now come, when God, their judge, will, in a wonderful manner, espouse the cause of this dead nation, and lift it up again, and vindicate its long-abused rights; take it out of the hands of its oppressors, and restore it to his favor, and to distinction and honor amongst the most highly-favored nations of the earth. This is their civil restoration. The expressions which follow, *and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets*—by bringing about in so wonderful a manner the fulfillment of all they had predicted of the recovery and the future glory of their nation—*and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small*

and great. This refers to the religious or ecclesiastic portion of these ancient prophecies, which encourage the pious Jews to look for this great day of their deliverance and restoration, and the re-establishment of their temple and worship in Jerusalem under the kingdom of their Messiah. Every attentive reader of the principal Jewish prophets will not fail to perceive that they predict both a civil and religious restoration of their outcast nation. See this subject, treated more at large under the sixth vial.

The third event of this era is the destroying of those that destroy the earth. There is no particular mode pointed out by which Providence will effect this result; but we may infer, that as the kingdoms of the world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ—have become converted from their opposition to Christ and his religion, and now embrace and support his gospel, that the civil laws of these different kingdoms will all aim at the destruction of vice, the suppression of violence, and the support of religion. I consider that this feature of the seventh trumpet age points to a perfect system of civil government such as the world has never yet witnessed—such as the intellectual powers of man, under the mellowing and refining influence of the religion of Christ, are fully adequate to produce and maintain. Under such a government, the peace, the purity, and prosperity of the world will rise to an eminence and grandeur which the imagination of man cannot now adequately conceive. It will be comprehended only when all evil influences and corrupt principles which tend to destroy the earth shall be destroyed out of the earth.

The last of the series of the seventh trumpet events is, that the temple of God will be opened in heaven, and there will be seen in his temple the ark of his *testament*—his truth, unadulterated gospel truth, will illumine that temple: the temple of God!—not that raised by the bigotry and the ignorance of men. There are in it no angry sectarian systems biting and devouring one another—no denominational bick-

erings—I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas!—no uncharitable wrangling about *exclusive* gospel prerogatives—shutting heaven against all who are not of *our* Church—denying any efficacy to the means of grace unless they are administered under *our* forms and by *our* priests! Nothing of all this in that temple. No; its portals are thrown open to all the world, and the angel of the gospel cries from its pinnacle to all the earth, come in! come in!

This theme is inspiring, and must warm the heart of every man who has a Christian's heart in him. And while we stand and gaze upon the glories of this open temple, like the apostles on the Mount of Transfiguration, we cannot help saying with them, *Lord, it is good for us to be here.* And we, like them, wish to build tabernacles and remain here; but like them, too, we can look upon these glories only for a little while. We must leave this mount of heavenly vision and go again into the agitation and commotion of worldly strife; for we are told that there are yet intervening between us and this glorious temple, *lightnings, and voices and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.*

The moral atmosphere of the world is not yet in a state of permanent quietude. There are yet important changes to be made in the governments of earth. Great hindrances in the way to man's moral and intellectual elevation, not observed or apprehended before, are now made manifest, and they are to be removed. Deep-rooted as they are in the habits and attachments of men, they are to be torn up. The highway of Christianity must be thrown up broad and clear, and be freed from every obstacle that would impede the progress of knowledge and the happiness of man. This work, even in this day of great light, will not be done without struggles against it on the part of the advocates of old systems. Their darkness does not yet comprehend the light. They will resist the swelling tide of truth tumultuously, signified by voices, and lightnings, and thunderings. But beyond these some-

thing more is to be looked for of a higher and more fearful import—*an earthquake and great hail!*

These will present themselves again in the chapters that fill up this outline sketch of the seventh trumpet. This is the last trumpet, and the scenes which will distinguish the close of its era will be the closing scenes of time—the end of the world!

To say more of them at present would be anticipating what may be more appropriately presented hereafter.

In pursuing the chain of prophesy, we have now reached a point at which all feelings of curiosity to witness the course of merely human events, must become absorbed in the deep anxiety which the mind feels in the profound subjects that now surround it. And the question starts up in the midst of this feeling of anxiety—"When will these things be? and is there any certain data that will give us an approximate idea of the period when they will occur? I answer, there is! Man, by his own genius, developing itself in the most wonderful production of art and science, unknown to the world before, gives the data upon which we are to rest our knowledge of the near approach of the seventh trumpet-days.

We shall find this sign of these times in the 10th chapter. It will be recollected that we passed over that chapter to avoid breaking the continuous chain of events under the trumpets. We now return to it, and I congratulate the reader that the subject of it is entirely free from the lightnings and earthquakes which gave terror to the scenes that we have passed through. We are all acquainted with the angel of this chapter; he is as familiar to us as household words. Let us introduce him.

CHAPTER X.

THE END OF TIME PROCLAIMED.

1. *And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud; and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:*

2. *And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth,*

3. *And cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.*

4. *And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.*

5. *And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,*

6. *And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, That there should be time no longer:*

7. *But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.*

8. *And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.*

9. *And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.*

10. *And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and*

ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it my belly was bitter.

11. *And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.*

This chapter forms a picture by itself, different and distinct from any other. It has no connection with any other vision. It contains a greater variety of incidents, and a more sublime description of the angel of which it gives the history, than any other chapter in the Revelations.

The conjectures as to who and what this angel is, are as various as the persons that have written on the subject. Some have imagined that it was Christ; others that it was some *created* being, acting as Christ's representative. They grope as men in the dark, and leave off, some of them, where they began the inquiry, not satisfied with the discoveries they have made. Dr. Adam Clarke asks, after giving his conjecture about the little book in the angel's hand—"But who knows what it means?" The Doctor might have said the same in relation to the whole chapter; for no one, in the day in which he wrote his commentary, could possibly understand this 10th chapter of the Revelations; for the reason, that the angel described in it had never existed before, nor did it exist at that time. Doctor Benson wrote after Doctor Clarke, and Mr. Croly after Doctor Benson. The last named writer says that—"This angel is some cre-"ated Being commissioned to announce important truths." But this interpretation disposes in a very summary manner with the appointment of the *prophet* for this very purpose. 4 chap. 1. We have seen nowhere an intimation that the prophetic office was changed from St. John to any other.

Mr. Croly says it was Christ; but this view is liable to still greater objections. If this had been the Lord Jesus, it would not have been necessary for some *other voice* to direct the prophet what he should do in relation to the seven thunders—to write them or not to write them. And again, this same voice from Heaven, directs the prophet to go and take

the little book out of the angel's hand. These acts imply inferiority in the angel to the power whose voice the prophet promptly obeyed.

But this angel was not a being either created or uncreated. It represents a *power*, which, as before stated, had no existence in the distinct form in which it appears in this chapter, at the time that some of those learned divines wrote their commentaries.

The description of the angel, and the circumstances which surround his appearance, present altogether a scene of grandeur and magnificence. "And I saw another mighty angel "come down from Heaven," not the heaven to which Christ ascended after his resurrection, but the earthly heaven—*Christendom*, clothed with a *cloud;* implying grandeur and triumph. The two witnesses ascended up to heaven in a cloud—that is in triumph—and a *rainbow* was upon his head! The mission of this angel is not to execute judgment upon men; he brings no implications of the divine wrath; the purpose of his appearance is not to destroy—for the rainbow—the pledge which God gave to Noah, of security and peace, is upon his head. These are the grand habiliments of the angel; the *cloud* and the *rainbow*. Next, his person and his position are described. *And he set his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth; and his face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire.* After this description, is it necessary to ask the question, who is this mighty angel? Does not its great voice, its face like the sun, and its feet on fire; proclaim it to be the present age of *steam power and the magnetic telegraph?* Where is the master of the pencil whose unrivalled skill could produce such a picture of the power of steam and the wonders of the telegraph?—so true in all its lineaments to the original, and so full of life as this picture is, sketched by the finger of prophesy, near two thousand years before these wonders of art and science had any existence? We all live in the presence of this angel, and therefore, I said it is as familiar to us as household words.

But before we go any further in this explanation of the

angel, let us hear what some very good people have to object to this mode of interpreting the Apocalypse. With a heavy sigh and a sad countenance they will say—"Alas! that "the solemn words of the Bible should be so lighty set by "as to suppose that God would direct his prophet to fore-"tell steamboats and telegraph wires!" Such are the views of some very pious people I have no doubt. They fancy that to suppose the Bible treats of anything but heaven and hell, is nothing else than trifling with the sacred volume. They look upon that book of inspiration with a reverential awe, and read it with groans. They speak of it in a manner so solemn that their children become at length afraid to look at it—and in this way these two witnesses are frequently slain by the hands of their friends! The gay and joyous spirits of youth are led to regard the Bible as the enemy of their happiness, and as the fetters which bind them down to gloom and melancholy, and deny them the cheerful and buoyant life which God and nature award to them. This superstitious awe of the Bible never did, and never can, produce any good. The Bible is the book that teaches the highest pleasures and the profoundest wisdom. To know ourselves; to know men; to know the world, and to know God, we must study the Bible.

The Bible in its prophetic teaching has noticed all the great moral and civil revolutions of this world from the days of Daniel and the other eminent Jewish prophets; the rise and fall of nations, the manners and customs of the people, in some instances, and even the change which the improvement in the arts has produced in their mode of warfare, have all been subjects of prophecy. It has foretold the overthrow of kingdoms and the rise and fall of empires, and is it beneath the dignity of that book to proclaim this mighty angel, whose feet of fire and sun-like face are to penetrate the dark and distant empires of paganism, and illumine and revolutionize them?

The attitude of the angel is most remarkable, and the prophet is very particular in describing it. His *right* foot is upon the *sea*, and his *left* foot upon the *earth*. This tells us

that the motive power of the age he refers to will be *the same* both upon the land and the sea, and that its greatest achievements will be accomplished upon the *sea.* The right hand is always spoken of in Scripture as denoting pre-eminence and superiority. Such is the meaning of the right foot in the present case. It is by the sea that this power will have access to distant islands and continents, and will bring them into easy and convenient intercourse with the Christian countries where this mighty angel had its origin.

His face was, as it were, the sun. The resemblance is not to the brightness of the sun ; this is not the meaning. The idea we are to receive from the comparison is, that the face of this angel *disseminates intelligence* with the same velocity with which rays of light are spread from the face of the sun. The human face is expressive of intelligence, the highest characteristic of man, and the telegraph corresponds with the face in its purpose of conveying intelligence.

The wonders of the telegraph as a means of communicating intelligence with inconceivable velocity need no comment. Intelligence is every day flying over the earth by the magnetic telegraph as swifty and as silently as the rays of light fly from the face of the sun. We can tell our thoughts to a friend a thousand miles off as distinctly and in almost as little time as we could if he were sitting by our side. The magnetic telegraph is a most striking illustration of the *face* of the angel.

His feet were *as pillars of fire.* The motive power is not fire, but resembles it in its burning and destroying effects. This motive power is *steam*, and it is like unto fire. This description brings before us in a forcible manner the furnaces and boilers of the great steamers and of the locomotive engine. The angel had in his hand a *little* book—*open*, not sealed, as the book with seven seals was. The *open* book denotes that there will be no impenetrable mystery about this angel. When he shall appear, or that which he represents, his vast powers, and the wonders he will constantly accomplish, will be obvious and open to the eye of every observer. The book is the *living*, *acting*, *present* history, so to speak, of the angel.

The angel cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth; and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. There is no language that can adequately express the grandeur of this figure. We may imagine this mighty angel assuming the sublime posture in which the prophet saw him, his left foot of fire on the earth, and his right foot of fire planted in the sea, unextinguished by its billows; his towering form rising in mid-heaven, and his face shooting out streams of intelligence, like coruscations from the bosom of the Aurora Borealis. Then he roars, and his voice is heard over the land and the sea, asserting his dominion over both; and from all the seas and their islands, and from all the continents of earth, the deep response comes rolling back in the voice of seven-fold thunder.

Roaring as the lion, is expressive of the wonderful effects which will be produced by steam and the magnetic telegraph. A great noise is the common metaphor of great changes in the world.

This loud cry of the angel is represented as being followed by the voice of seven thunders, which well represents the universal acclamation which will express the pleasure and astonishment of the world at the results of these discoveries.

The prophet, struck with wonder at this stupendous scene, yields to the first impulse of his feeling, and wishes to write it down. *I was about to write*, he says, *but was told to seal up the things uttered by the thunders, and write them not.* They will need no recording—seal them up; not for *secrecy*, but to be laid aside for the present. They will come up in their order in the history of the angel;—they will come out in such rapid succession, and produce effects so amazing and stupendous, that they will be their own best expounders, and all the nations will behold them conquering and revolutionizing earth and sea.

Every steamer as she boldly plows the deep, defying the storm and treading the angry billows under her feet of fire, proclaims "*the tenth chapter of the Revelation!*" And every train of cars as it sweeps over the land, following the fiery tread of its locomotive, announcing itself by the wild yell of

its steam-cry, shouts as it goes, "*the tenth chapter of the Revelation!*" And the Magnetic Telegraph, stretching its wires in mid-heaven, by its silent and mysterious powers exciting and moving the great emporiums of the nations without moving itself, is constantly saying in its solemn and speechless grandeur, "Behold the sun-face of the mighty angel of the tenth chapter of the Revelation!"

But the real design of introducing this angel is explained in the 5th, 6th, and 7th verses. Steam power and the magnetic telegraph are the most wonderful productions of the world. The eyes of all the nations are turned upon these stupendous works, and they are seized upon by prophecy, and employed as an appropriate occasion to give notice to the world and to the Church of an event which deeply involves the interest and happiness of both. This angel is represented as lifting up his hand to heaven, in the form of solemn asseveration, and swearing by the Creator of all things that are in heaven and in earth, *that there should be time no longer; but in the days of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.* The meaning of this oath is as if he spoke in a familiar style—"Men of earth, I stand between "the sixth and the seventh trumpets; the next trumpet voice "will be the seventh and the *last.* When that sounds, time "will be no more: what thou hast to do, do it quickly!"

The mystery of God, which is to cease after the sounding of the seventh trumpet, is the gospel system as the means or plan of salvation. This ending of the mystery of God closes the day of gospel grace. Further notice of this will appear in a succeeding chapter.

The prophet gives another point of illustration in the history of the mighty angel. He was commanded to take the little book out of the angel's hand and to eat it, and he was notified that the effect it would produce would be as pleasant to his taste as honey is to the palate, while a directly contrary feeling or sensation would be experienced after he had eaten it: *It shall make thy belly bitter.*

This little book is the history of the incidents which make up the life of the angel. They are given under the figure of some agreeable repast, which, whilst we partook of it, was as sweet to the mouth as honey, but afterwards some crude and indigestible portion of what we had eaten produces in the stomach severe pain—the idea conveyed by the word *bitter.*

This little book represents a knowledge of the history of steam-power and the electro-magnetic telegraph, with their great and wonderful effects. Eating the book implies the possession of this knowledge, especially the use which the prophet makes of these great discoveries.

The effect of this knowledge is first pleasurable and afterwards painful !

As a wonderful discovery which promotes the great operations of commerce over the whole earth, and brings distant nations nigh to each other, and facilitates intercourse and rapid communications between individuals dwelling at a great distance apart, it excites the wonder and admiration of the world, and affords an extent of gratification and pleasure which no discovery hitherto known to men has done. This is the meaning of the prophet when, on eating the little book, he says : *And it was in my mouth sweet as honey.* But when men look away from or beyond the pleasure and convenience produced by the active, stirring life of steam power and the telegraph, and reflect upon the next great change in the affairs of this world which this angel proclaims, when the mystery of God should be finished, these feelings of pleasure and gratification will be changed into feelings of grief and fear with all whose moral character unfits them for that change—the little book will become bitter in the belly. The exterior view of this discovery is full of pleasing wonder ; but when we go *down* into the depths of its future revelations, it becomes a subject of fear and anguish in the reflections of the ungodly.

That the end of time announced by this angel is not the end of the world, in the sense generally supposed, is mani-

fest, from the fact that the prophet was told—*He must prophesy again before many people and nations, and tongues and kings.* This is nothing more than an explanatory note. With most men the opinion, or belief, is common, that the end of the world, or the end of time—terms which are synonymous—shuts up and closes all the works of Providence, and leaves nothing more to be done in the disposition of human affairs. But the last verse, just quoted, corrects that error, in the instruction which it gives, seemingly for the use of the prophet ; but in reality is an admonition to the Church, that although the mystery of God is finished, time shall be no longer as a gospel dispensation, yet, the *perfection* and *glory* of institutions adapted to the wants of man will then only begin to appear.

I have so frequently objected to the literal interpretation of the prophet, that I deem it necessary to make an explanation here, as I have given a *literal* interpretation in relation to the posture of the mighty angel.

There can be no doubt with any one, that the prophet means the *natural sea* and the *natural earth,* when he tells us where the left and the right foot of the angel were placed. I believe I have said before that where metaphors cannot be employed, the interpretation must be literal. It is obvious that there is nothing in nature that could serve as a symbol of the sea or of the earth, nothing but what would appear ridiculous, if employed as a figure to represent the boundless extent of both. In this case, therefore, a literal exposition is indispensable.

The purpose of this angel, as he announces it, being to warn the nations that the age of steam-power and the electro-magnetic telegraph would intervene between the sixth and seventh trumpets ; we see how proper it was, and how exactly in its right place the tenth chapter was placed, although it very abruptly breaks the connexion between the ninth and the eleventh chapters ; having no connexion with the subject of either. The sixth trumpet scenes are in the ninth chapter, and those of the seventh trumpet are in the eleventh chapter. Of course the proper place of this angel was to be found between those two chapters.

CHAPTER XII.

VISION OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH.

The prophet now returns to point out those events which he, from necessity, had to pass by while he preserved the consecutive order of the seals and trumpets. He could not tell all at once, nor could he introduce any new subject without interrupting the thread of his history. But having completed this he now returns to show us the different scenes which were presented to his view, at other periods of his vision.

This Book of the Revelation is, as Dr. Clarke says, "A "standing prophet in the Church." It announces those great events of the world in which Christianity is interested, and especially points to those by which the prosperity of the Church is advanced.

In this view of the purpose of the prophesy, how is it possible any one could suppose that *England* and *America* has no place in its visions? The two nations which, more than all the rest of the nations together, have sustained and spread Protestant Christianity over the earth.

This twelfth chapter brings out England and America in the early period of the history of their Protestant religion.

1. *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:*

2. *And she, being with child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.*

3. *And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold*

a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

4. *And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.*

5. *And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.*

6. *And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*

The chapter opens with an exhibition of the Church of Christ—the Gospel Church; which now appears before the world as having risen from the Reformation, organized, established, and above the reach and power of future persecution. This is the first object which excites the prophet's wonder; and the next is the old church, under the figure of a great red dragon! hostile and persecuting, altogether antagonistic to the first. These two churches employ in their description almost the entire chapter.

Strange views of this Apocalyptic vision have been expressed by learned men who have written upon the subject. It is really difficult to perceive how they could reconcile such explanations as they have given with the figure employed by the prophet, and with the time to which this representation must of necessity have referred. The woman's cries and travail they tell us, imply the persecutions the church suffered from the Roman Emperors. If this were so, the church would have been always in this delicate situation. She suffered severe persecution by the hands of the Jews, severer still from Pagan Rome, and quite as severe as either from Papal Rome. Now how can it be said that this one solitary instance of being in the pains and travail of child bearing, was produced by persecution from her enemies? The pains of the woman in the picture before us were within herself;

they were produced by *internal* disquietude—not from anything external. The explanation on this point wholly fails, for want of agreement with the metaphor. And, the conversion of *Constantine*, they further say, was the birth of the child. This is no better than the first part of the explanation. That which was produced by the travail of the woman, that was, born from her, must have been that which had been *within her*, and was part of herself. There was no agreement here with Constantine. He was not *in* the Church, he was a pagan persecutor of the church, until his conversion—then he was brought into the church. Not to be tedious in pursuing the various points of dissimilarity, between the text and these explanations, I will state one which must at once strike every reader as an unanswerable objection to the views given by Bishop Newton and other learned divines on this vision.

This man-child was to rule all nations with a rod of iron! But it was not long after the conversion of Constantine before the sceptre fell from the hands of the Roman Emperor and the whole empire was broken to pieces and trampled upon by barbarians. It is out of the question that this power—this mere fag-end—this last expiring spasm almost, of the Roman Empire could have been the man-child that was to rule all nations with a rod of iron, in any sense of that figure.

The argument by which these divines support their theory or explanation does not stop with the conversion of Constantine. As they have placed the woman in Rome, the dragon, too, that watched for the birth of her child that he might destroy it, must be in Rome also! And this *red* dragon they make to be the emblem of the bloodthirsty emperors, *its color* corresponding with the color of the *gorgeous robes* worn by them! I apprehend that this dragon will turn out to be something in the history of a Church in Christendom, of much more consequence than the mere indication of the color of imperial robes.

The ablest writers on the Revelations have been those of the English Church, and it is very surprising that they seem never to have thought that their own country, though far above all others for her Protestant power and light, had any place in the great prophetic panorama. The picture of prophecy could never have been complete without giving England and America the distinguished positions they occupy upon its canvass !

This representation of the Church is one of the most sublime, beautiful, and touching figures in the whole Book of Revelation. It merits our particular attention, and cannot fail to command our admiration. We lost the Church of Christ when the white-horse scene passed away. From that period we have been wandering in darkness without a spot to rest the foot of hope upon. Every successive picture, as it passed in gloomy aspect before us, presented nothing but a world agitated by storms of human passion and powers of darkness ; but all at once, to our joy and surprise, a great wonder appears in heaven—a Woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars ! What simple grandeur, what inexpressible beauty there is in this figure !

Where shall we look for this glorious appearance of the woman ? Shall we find it in France ? No. In Germany ? No. Is it in Spain or Italy ? Oh, no ; it is in *England !* There the Protestant Church rose from the Reformation, and developed her true gospel character more fully and in greater strength than in any other country. There she stands, as the prophet saw her, in her lofty position, before the eyes of all the nations ; her crown adorned with twelve stars, denoting that she is guided and governed by the light and the teaching of the twelve apostles. *And she was clothed with the sun.* I have all along ascribed this symbol to England, and it is nowhere more appropriate than just here. The woman wears this robe, gracefully thrown over her, as a convenience, and at the same time a protection against the rude blasts of

the storm. This is the *civil authority* thrown around the Church, shielding her against the violence of her foes : such foes as the great red dragon, whose malicious vigilance needed something to check and beat back the desperate efforts it was always making to destroy the woman. A temporal or political defence in the presence of such an enemy was necessary for her safety, and this she had secured to her by her union with the civil power of England. England was the bulwark of the Protestant religion in Europe. Though the spiritual being or life of the Church was far above the world, yet she had connections in the world which were more or less affected by the shifting and changing policy of civil governments. Wherever English commerce or arms extended themselves amongst the nations, English Protestantism also went with safety. Thus the woman was clothed with the sun, shielded and defended by the constitution and laws of England. But these laws and constitution were not the Church, any more than the robe with which the woman was clothed was part of herself. They were the loose garment thrown over the woman for convenience and protection. This is that condition of the Church which has impressed so many good people with a pious horror. "Church and State !" they exclaim, and are amazed out of measure to hear anybody defend such an unscriptural connection ! And these people would probably be amongst the first to cry out for the arm of civil power to interpose its protection if any attempt were made to destroy their religious rights and privileges !

This whole chapter is full of instruction on this point. The very purpose of disclosing this great red dragon arrayed against the woman, and the account given of his subsequent efforts to destroy the woman after failing in his design to destroy her child, are reasons going to show the wise arrangement of Providence in appointing this civil defence for his Church, in clothing her with the sun ! This union of Church and State was of God's appointment, and when he sees it to be no longer necessary he will dissolve it.

England has great cause to glory before God. Her kings have been nursing fathers and her queens nursing mothers of the Protestant religion for three hundred years. She has succored it in all lands where it was oppressed and persecuted. And at no period of her history has her own civil and religious light shone so bright, nor has the prosperity and happiness of her people ever been so great as in the present time, under the reign of her Queen Victoria!

The high tone of moral sentiment, the good-will towards all nations, and the peace, respect and honor, at home and abroad, which now distinguish the English nation, are the happy effects of the wise and benignant administration of her government, directed and tempered by her pure Protestant religion.

England was elected by the Almighty for the great purpose in which he has employed her. She entered upon the work of her high calling early in the day of the Reformation, and she has never failed nor faltered in her course; and we may apply to her the language of the Psalmist, when exulting in the honor which God had shown his own nation: *Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord!*

Another peculiarity in the appearance of the woman is that the *moon* was under her feet. It is hardly necessary to repeat that the woman represents both the *Church* and *State* of England—her civil and religious institutions are blended with each other.

France was at that particular time precisely in the situation with respect to her Protestant population that gave her the symbol of the moon. (See the remarks upon the moon under the sixth seal.)

England and France were the leading powers of Europe, but the superiority of the former, in the civil and religious point of view, is expressed by the fact that the moon was under the feet of the woman. I believe that nothing more is intended by this part of the figure than to give a prophetic

declaration, that the nation by which the Protestant religion would be cherished and defended would occupy a pre-eminent position above the nations that supported Popery, the adverse religion—such as England has occupied from the time of the Reformation down to the present time.

France, or the Moon, was unquestionably at the head of the continental powers; and if she, who was superior to all these, was under the feet of the great Protestant nation, it follows that all the rest were likewise in a state of inferiority to her.

Before noticing the great red dragon, the other wonder, which also appeared in heaven simultaneously with the appearance of the woman clothed with the sun, I think it best, for the sake of perspicuity, first to see the woman quite out of her troubles, and rejoice with her over the birth of her man-child.

The peculiar situation of the woman referred to in the second verse, very forcibly expresses the *intestine* discord and violent contentions which arose in the Church of England in the reign of Elizabeth. I shall merely glance at these jarring circumstances here, having had occasion to speak more fully of them under the fourth seal.

Archbishop Laud was pertinaciously attached to the *forms* and *ceremonies* of religious worship; and so bigoted was he in the observance of them as almost to exclude all attention to the vital principle of godliness. His manner of conducting the ceremonies of worship gave offence to many, and led them to fear that the leaven of Popery was still present in the Church of England. They went a step further, and demanded the removal of some things, and a change in others, until what was at first a difference of opinion only, now became a matter of public and general strife and bitter contention. Members of Parliament did not hesitate to express, in their official station, their abhorrence of the close resemblance to the Romish worship which they imagined they discovered in the Church of England, while people in the or-

dinary stations of life inveighed bitterly against the "Popish "customs."

These obtained the name of Puritans, through their zeal to purify the church from the dross of Popery. These contentions were carried to such a length that Elizabeth deemed it necessary to rebuke those members of Parliament who had complained of the evils in the church, and the bishops and clergy administered from their pulpits pretty severe admonitions to the people against meddling with ecclesiastical prerogatives. Upon the other hand, the discontented were not backward in imputing Popery, in all its religious deformity, to the church and to all who governed it.

From this brief statement of the condition of the church, at that time, it is not difficult to perceive that the pains of the woman, that is, the church, must have been distressing enough; *and she cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered* from such unhappy contentions.

The dissatisfaction of the Puritans led many of them to leave their own country and join the Protestants in Holland. But this did not meet the purpose of Providence, and they were not contented there. A number of them turned their eyes to the New World, and resolved to seek in the wilds of America the religious freedom and purity which they imagined could not be found in their own country.

Assembled on the deck of their ship, their aged and venerable pastor reverently and devoutly committed them to the power and mercy of God. Amidst tears and prayers they parted from their friends, and launched out upon the ocean to plant the tree of religious and civil liberty in the New World. They landed on Plymouth Rock, in December, 1620. *This was the birth of the man-child!*—this immigration of the Pilgrims to the shores of America grew out of the painful agitations and disquietude of the Church of England.

The opposite terms—*man* and *child*—used to designate the subject of this birth, are very significant, and highly appropriate.

The Puritans came to this New World in the full possession of religious knowledge and experience. They did not require to be taught, like children, the catechism of their religion ; it was in their heads and in their hearts. They were men—full-grown men, in this respect. They understood, too, the principles of civil government, and formed, as soon as they landed, a perfect miniature of a well-ordered nation ; thus they were full-grown men, in civil and religious knowledge and experience, while in a state of *childhood* connected with their political condition.

From the fewness of their numbers they were physically disqualified to meet and overcome the dangers of their situation. Surrounded by hordes of savages, cruel and bloodthirsty, they were constantly exposed to the danger of being cut off by them ; and they were in a most inhospitable climate upon the eve of dread winter, which of itself, and under their circumstances, was enough to extinguish all hope and overwhelm them with despair. To human sight their condition was one of imminent peril if not of certain destruction. Yet, in defiance of all these dangers, they grew and prospered, and became a great nation! How was this done? not by the wisdom nor the power of man. The prophet tells us how it was done: *And her child was caught up unto God and to his throne.* Here is the true secret of the safety and the prosperity of the Pilgrims. God took them under his special care. He strengthened their hearts in the days of their trial, and succored them in all their afflictions : and by his constant overruling providence, signified by his *throne,* he guided and defended them in the midst of their enemies, and led them in perfect safety, even in the presence of great danger.

Children of the Pilgrim Fathers ! behold your sire, in this man-child of the twelfth chapter of the Revelations ! And behold the hand of God in guiding and protecting him in the day of his childhood ; and marvelously conducting him through dangers which no human wisdom or power, without

such aid, could have averted; and let your annual celebrations of his birth record the continued gratitude of his brave, generous, and independent children.

The destiny of the man-child, as declared by the prophet, was, that he should *rule all nations with a rod of iron!*

The first thought which this announcement is most likely to produce, is that of a grasping ambition to bring other nations under his dominion, and to exert an oppressive and tyrannical power over them. There is no such thing intended by the text. He is to be the great *lever* which will lift the nations out of the abyss of ignorance and oppression in which they are kept by tyrannical and despotic rulers.

The figure is designed simply to express the strong *moral* force, or influence, which the nation that would arise from this man-child would exert over the governments of the earth.

The peculiar form of the United States Government—the equal rights of all; the peace, security, and prosperity enjoyed by the people who live under its just and equal laws; have had a wonderful effect upon other nations.

By the power and influence of her free institutions she has shaken the old despotic governments of Europe, and produced in many of them a more liberal and enlightened state of things, like the burning-glasses of Archimedes, which reflected upon the distant ships of the enemy in the Bay of Syracuse such a powerful heat as to compel them to change their position, or be consumed.

By the powerful influence reflected from the United States upon the nations of Europe, the people, whose rulers deny them the enjoyment of either religious or civil rights, have been led to inquire why they should not have the same rights under their laws as the people of the United States enjoy, and this inquiry has aroused them to efforts to secure those rights.

In some instances the demand for constitutional government by the people of Europe has shaken the throne into submission to those demands. In short, a great revolution

has taken place in the political views of European nations, produced by the example of the United States.

The sea of European politics is yet in a state of agitation, and results will still be produced there, under the moral force of the "rod of iron," that will change the whole aspect of human government.

The bigotry and despotism that oppressed and ground the southern portion of the American continent have been beaten to pieces by this "rod of iron;" and although the different independent governments which have sprung from the old ruins of despotism there have not yet reached the full form of their great exemplar, still they are in the way of gradual and progressive improvement.

The United States has set an example of free and independent government such as was never seen in the world before; and if her people are true to themselves, and true to their great and free institutions, this government must revolutionize the world—must, by its irresistible moral force, *rule all nations with a rod of iron.*

It is wonderful to see that feeble and delicate scion, which a little more than two centuries ago was transplanted from the soil of Europe to the rocky and sterile shores of New-England, now throwing out its branches over half this continent, and lifting its top to the clouds, and to witness the nations of the old world reaching out their arms to gather its fruit, and pressing, in great multitudes, to repose under the shade of its free government!

This is the *man-child!* Under the fostering influence of political institutions, securing free and equal rights to all, and a free Protestant religion, he has grown up to the stature of a powerful and independent nation.

After the birth of the man-child *the Woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her a thousand two hundred and three-score days.*

The wilderness, of course, all will understand, is metaphorical. It is not a place of solitude, an unfrequented desert—

nothing like the wilderness where John the Baptist first called men to repentance, nor that where Elijah concealed himself from the anger of Ahab, and was fed by the ravens at one time, and at another time from the handful of meal and the meagre cruise of oil, the last but inexhaustible morsel of the widow's stock of provision in the time of a raging famine.

The meaning of this wilderness is simply that state of worldly government or power whose laws and institutions aim at nothing beyond the interests of time, in opposition to the Church, whose government is spiritual, and her laws derived from the Word of God, her purposes not being limited to the present world, but reaching to the heavenly state. Between these two governments there is as great a difference as there is between the highly improved and cultivated land, yielding its abundant fruits for the comforts and enjoyment of man, and the wilderness, where all is dreary and uncultivated. The moral difference between the two is the point referred to by the prophet.

The wilderness is the state of worldly government, and by the appointment of God the Woman fled to this worldly government, the place prepared for her, where she should be fed—that is, *protected*, *defended*. In this sense we are to understand the expression, *feed her there*. This woman is the Protestant Church, or Apostolic Church. The adversary of this woman was the great red dragon, (see verse 3d,) which stood before the woman to devour her child as soon as it was born, and afterwards made efforts to destroy the woman. The dragon was armed with all the civil powers of the beast with seven heads and ten horns, and it was necessary that the woman should have the protection and defence of a civil power, which was given to her under the figure of being clothed with the sun! Sheltered under the civic power of England—"Church and State"—was the appointment of God, as we learn by the sixth verse.

I have remarked before, that the 1260 days was the time which would elapse from the first apostacy of the Church un-

til the time Christianity would be re-established, as the effect of the Reformation. The meaning of the text here can only be, that the woman will be protected and defended by the civil power, religious liberty will be guaranteed to men by the civil law henceforth, and for the unexpired term of the 1260 days.

In the 14th verse the woman is represented as having two wings of a great eagle given to her, that she might fly into the *wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.*

The dragon and serpent are the same: they both represent the great persecuting power seeking to destroy the rising Church of the Reformation.

This verse represents the woman under very different circumstances from those in which we have seen her when clothed with the sun. We must not contemplate the church as located in one particular place ; as in England, for example, where we see her clothed with the sun! But she is elsewhere, and while she is seen in England securely surrounded by the civic power, she is seen in Germany struggling with the powers of the dragon, *and pursued by the blood cast out of the mouth of the serpent!*

It is in Germany that we are to look for the fulfillment of the fourteenth verse.

The wings of the great eagle imply pretty much the same thing as the drapery of the sun thrown around the woman. Both are *political*, and both are designed to show the establishment of the Protestant religion under the sanction of civil authority. Not to be tedious on this point, I will just say, that the two wings of the great eagle signify the two *treaties* of *Prague* and *Westphalia!* The battle of Nordlingen resulted most disastrously for the interests of the Protestants, as they supposed ; but a treaty was made between the " Evangelical Union" and the Emperor, signed at Prague, 1635, " which guaranteed to the Protestants for ever the " political rights they had under the pacification of Passaco;

"and the free exercise of their religion in all the dominions "of the empire, except the kingdom of Bohemia and the "provinces belonging to the House of Austria."* Terms so favorable to the Protestant cause were not expected by them. But the Protestant religion was placed upon a still higher ground of security in the treaty of Westphalia, signed about twelve years after the treaty of Prague.

This last treaty placed Protestantism upon an equal footing with the Catholic religion in all civil and political functions of the empire. This treaty was the fundamental law of the empire, and whilst it quieted the great religious quarrels of Germany, it became the basis of all subsequent treaties.

The two wings of the great eagle are well illustrated by these two treaties. Wings are, in Scripture, a frequent emblem of protection and defence, and they place the bird, especially the eagle, beyond the reach of danger.

By these wings the woman flew into the *wilderness, into her place; where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.*

The German Empire, by its treaty stipulations, guarantees the civil and religious rights of Protestantism under those treaties. The time, and times, and half a time, are no doubt synonimous with the 1,260 days. But the manner of stating the time that this woman will remain in the wilderness, so different from the simple 1,260 days, is probably to remind us that her interests are now in the hands of another nation, whose language, as well as government, is very different from that of the nation in which the woman brought fourth the man-child.

The opinion entertained generally, by writers on the Apocalypse, that the wilderness state is the state of depression and persecution with the church, is quite erroneous. Just the contrary is the fact! The peace and prosperity of the

* Russell's Modern Europe.

church are secured by the defences thrown around her by civil government. The woman is fed—nourished, as the prophetic language is, in this wilderness—that is the free exercise of religion is secured to the church, by the laws of the country.

To what do Christians owe their peace and security, when they assemble in their different churches for the worship of God, but to those *civil laws* which punish men for disturbing worshiping assemblies? In like manner are Christians protected in all their benevolent enterprises in spreading the Gospel and extending the boundaries of Christianity. Thus is the woman *fed—nourished*, in the wilderness of civil government.

That certainly cannot be said to be a state of depression and persecution to the church which affords her the benefit of wholesome and protecting laws; laws, without which she could have no security and certainly no prosperity. This is the broadest and largest sense in which it may be said the earth helps the woman.

How long will this help be necessary—or this wilderness state continue? The prophet tells us until the end of the 1,260 days. Without attempting to say exactly *when* that will be, there is no difficulty in saying *what* will be, when that period arrives.

The kingdoms of this world will then have become the kingdoms of God and of Christ! The church will not then require the arm of the civil power for its defence; but the kingdoms of this world will then derive their force and form from Christianity. She will protect *them! She* will give the law, and civil government will be her servant, to execute and carry out the great principles of the law of the Lord.

Before proceeding further in reviewing the chapter, it is proper that something should be said of the great red dragon mentioned in the 3d verse.

It is quite evident that this is a power antagonistic to the woman clothed with the sun, and is actuated by a spirit of

inveterate hostility to her interests, first seeking to destroy her child, and afterward to destroy the woman herself.

The very color of the dragon, being red, is expressive of the cruel and bloody persecution with which it pursued the woman.

This dragon is the old religious despotism which for a thousand years had kept Christendom under its feet by a system of religious tyranny, devised and arranged in all its parts, and operating with such sure and certain effects that nothing seemed likely ever to change or disturb its vast dominion.

But the bold stand made by the Reformation against the errors and corruptions of that system aroused the fierceness of its temper, and caused it to put in motion its powerful energies to destroy the invader.

The dragon is not now mentioned in the Bible for the first time. In the Old Testament Scriptures it is the constant emblem of merciless cruelty and ferocious persecution. Of all that was fearful and most to be dreaded under the Jewish figures and emblems, nothing presented a stronger emblem than the terrific dragon ; and yet, upon the authority of Dr. Adam Clarke, no such beast as the dragon ever existed! He says it was a *fabulous* beast of antiquity, and had no real existence.

The dragon is represented by the prophet as having seven heads and ten horns, and wearing seven crowns upon his heads ; his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth—(verse 3, 4.)

The Romish hierarchy does not conform to this description, and yet that power is the dragon!

We shall understand the meaning of the prophet better when we come to explain the thirteenth chapter. There we shall see the beast which rose up out of the sea having those appendages of heads, and horns, and crowns. And we shall see that the dragon moved and impelled the beast—in short, was its ecclesiastic *soul.* All its movements of persecution,

all the efforts made by the beast to suppress the Reformation, originated with the dragon, and were impelled by his influence. It is in this sense we must understand the prophet when he describes the dragon as wearing seven heads and ten horns, and having seven crowns upon his heads. He was identified with the beast having those political appendages. While the beast was a great political power, a vast empire, the dragon was its *soul*, its religious principle, which impelled all its movements against the Reformation.

In this empire the dragon is pre-eminent. He is identified with its powers, and may be said to wear its heads, and horns, and its crowns, and by it he drew the third part of the stars of heaven and cast them down to the earth.

How different is the picture of this red dragon from that of the woman, whose crown reflected the mild lustre of the twelve stars, while she wore the drapery of the sun ; not as a garment for vain and ostentatious show, nor as the emblem of belligerent power, but as a convenient defence against the occasional blasts of the storm.

These remarks must suffice for the present as explanatory of the dragon. We shall have occasion again to bring it under notice in an earlier period of its power and authority. Let us now proceed to the remaining portion of the chapter.

7. *And there was war in heaven : Michael and his angels fought against the dragon ; and the dragon fought and his angels,*

8. *And prevailed not ; neither was their place found any more in heaven.*

9. *And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world : he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

10. *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ : for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.*

11. *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by*

the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

12. *Therefore rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*

13. *And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child.*

14. *And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.*

15. *And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.*

16. *And the earth helped the woman; and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.*

17. *And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ*

Upon the appearance of the two great wonders in heaven, the woman clothed with the sun and the great red dragon, a contest arose, in which the whole world is interested. This contest was to decide whether the Romish Church should continue to hold Christendom in darkness and superstition, or whether it should be rescued from her dominion and be placed in the light and freedom of the true gospel religion.

This was a great moral and intellectual conflict, in its true character; and for the most part it maintained that peculiar aspect. But, unfortunately, the violent passions of heated partisans on both sides seemed to make the resort to carnal weapons almost unavoidable, as we shall see in the sequel.

And there was war in heaven, says the prophet, *Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels.*

Who is Michael? and who his angels? every one is ready to inquire.

Frequent reference is made to a dignitary under that name in the Book of Daniel. No doubt, the Jews held that some particular angel in the celestial heaven, pre-eminent in power, was always engaged in their defence in their frequent emergencies. Indeed Michael is referred to by Jude, in such a manner as to leave no doubt of his superior rank amongst the angels in heaven, and the frequent reference to him as the advocate of the cause of God's people, has given his name to inferior and earthly powers that have defended the cause of God and righteousness in the earth.

The angel, speaking to Daniel, 10th chap. : 13, evidently refers to some political power that stood up for the people of the Most High, against some other political power that stood up to oppress them. In this instance it is distinctly asserted, that Michael is one of *the chief Princes.* Chap. 12. : 1.

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great Prince! which standeth for the children of thy people. Book of Daniel.

These two texts show that the name Michael was applied to the civil power, which stood up for the defence of the people of God, and we shall see that there was a Michael, a great Prince too, in the German Empire, who stood up for the defence and protection of the Reformation at that memorable epoch in the history of Christianity. This was no other than Prince Frederick, Elector of Saxony, decidedly the most powerful of the Princes of Germany at that time.

The commanding position of that Prince was a wall of defence around Luther. Frederick did not commit himself as a partisan to the Reformation, but he employed his great authority in defence of the reformer, when the dragon sought to lay violent hands upon him.

The Pope was engaged watching the bold steps which Luther was taking to expose the errors of his church, and finding that his vengeance could not reach the reformer while he remained in Germany, demanded that he should be

sent to Rome to be tried for heresy! Frederick knew if Luther went to Rome to be tried, his friends would never hear of him again: and he signified his desire to the Pope that Luther should be tried in Germany. Neither the Pope nor the Emperor desired to provoke the dipleasure of so great a prince as Frederick, and the scheme of taking Luther to Rome had to be given up. Other princes sided with Frederick, and showed favor to the reformer; besides, many able theologians and political dignitaries of inferior rank to the princes, came forward nobly in his support. Thus Michael and his angels fought. Upon the other hand, the dragon and his angels maintained their side of the struggle with a desperate energy. Angry threats and dreadful anathemas were hurled from Rome at Luther and all who countenanced him. All the sophistry and ecclesiastical learning of Rome were employed to confound the reformer. Threats and persuasions were resorted to by political functionaries, with all the intrigue and bribery which they were capable of employing, to induce the princes who favored Luther to abandon him. But Michael and his angels were not to be turned aside by such means. *And they* (the dragon and his angels) *prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world! he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.* 8th and 9th verses.

In these two verses the prophet gives the result of this war in heaven, without saying anything about the various means which brought it about. This ejectment of the dragon and his angels was a progressive work; he did not fall suddenly, but by gradual steps he descended from his place in heaven, until he was entirely cast out, *and their place was found no more in heaven!*

The dragon is spoken of under three different names:—the Devil, the Serpent, and Satan. These signify the different means employed by the great adversary of God and man

to deceive the whole world. At one time he is seen in the character of a roaring lion—despotic government—at another, as an angel of light, in the form of a Christian Church, giving counsel to men as to what will best secure their happiness, as he did to Eve in the garden ; and at another time, by the dissimulation of intriguing societies, he creeps, like a serpent, by the most insidious means, into the confidence and esteem of men, charming them, as it is said the serpent does the bird, until it becomes an easy prey. In the most bland and courteous manner this serpent presents his temptations, until his victim is thrown into a state of torpor by the opiates of his seductive wiles, when he is bound in the chains of the deceiver, and led into the most degraded moral slavery.

By being cast out, we are to understand, that the power and authority of the dragon, which had before been supreme, was, during this war, so reduced and modified that it ceased to give any alarm to Michael and his angels ; or, literally speaking, the power of the Pope in the German Empire was no longer an insuperable barrier to the progress of the Reformation. The first step in the overthrow of the dragon and his angels was the protection extended to Luther by Prince Frederick, and his refusal to allow the reformer to be taken to Rome to be tried, according to the Pope's command. "Leo X. became alarmed at Luther's progress, and, convinced "that all hope of reclaiming him by forbearance was in vain, "issued a *bull* of excommunication against him. His books "were ordered to be burnt, and he himself was delivered over "to Satan as an obstinate heretic, if he did not, within sixty "days, publicly recant his errors. This sentence neither dis- "concerted nor intimidated Luther. He declaimed against "the tyranny and usurpations of the court of Rome with "greater vehemence than ever, exhorted all Christian princes "to 'shake off such an ignominious yoke, and boasted of his "'own happiness in being marked out as the object of eccle- "'siastical indignation, because he had ventured to assert the

" 'rights of religion and the mental liberty of mankind.' " Nor did he confine his contempt of the papal power to " words alone. He assembled all the professors and students " of the University of Wittemberg, and with great pomp, and " before a vast multitude of spectators, cast the volumes of " the canon law, (of the Romish Church,) together with the " *bull of excommunication*, into the flames, and his example " was imitated in several other cities.

" While the credit and authority of the Roman Pontiff " were thus furiously shaken in Germany, an attack no less " violent, and occasioned by the same causes, was made upon " them in Switzerland.

" Zuingleus, the intrepid reformer in the latter country, " surpassed even the German reformer in his daring and rapid " steps to overturn the whole fabric of the established re- " ligion, and the Pope's supremacy was soon denied in the " greater part of Switzerland."

The above incidents in the history of these times show how the measures progressed which ultimately cast out the dragon and his angels.

When the *Pope's bull* was publicly burnt, the main pillar of his power fell. It was the dread and terror inspired by the bull that kept Germany and other countries of Europe so long in the chains of superstition and mental slavery.

The historian further says : " Luther's writings were read " with avidity, and his discourses were listened to with ad- " miration. He appealed to reason and Scripture for the " truth of his arguments, not to the decisions of councils or " of popes. A corner of the veil was now happily lifted. " The people, ever fond of judging for themselves, flattered " by this appeal, began to call in question that authority " which they had formerly reverenced, which they had blindly " adored, and Luther, imboldened by success, extended his " views, and ventured to declaim against other abuses. From " abuses he proceeded to usurpations, from usurpations to

"errors, and from one error to another, till the whole fabric "of the Romish Church began to totter."*

The moral means which were employed against the colossal power of Popery, and were chiefly instrumental in subverting and casting it out of the empire, are stated by the prophet : *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.* Luther preached the gospel to the people ; they saw that the pardon of sins was to be had only by faith in the blood of the Lamb, by the teaching of the gospel of Christ, and not by the indulgences of the Pope. This was the doctrine that overcame the superstitious mummery and delusion with which the people had been blinded. But there was something further—*and by the word of their testimony.* The lives of the reformers were marked by a strong and constant piety ; practising themselves what they preached to others ; giving a living and practical testimony of the saving power of the doctrines which they preached ; and without this, no opposition that could have been made to the errors of the Romish Church would have ever produced any religious reformation.

It is further said : *And they loved not their lives to the death.* This was literally true. When Luther was ordered to appear before the Diet at Worms, many of his friends, dreading the treachery of his enemies, and knowing they were anxious to destroy him, endeavored to dissuade him from going. His noble reply to their fears was : "I am lawfully summoned to "appear before the Diet, and if there be as many devils "there as there are tiles upon the houses, I will go." This was one instance of many in which the bold and fearless spirit of the reformers was manifested. But I do not think that the text refers to the natural life, but to the consequences of the Pope's anathema, which were more dreaded by the people than was the death of the body. But all dread of these was cast away, and the reformers regarded them with the greatest

* Russell.

contempt, as was instanced in burning the Pope's bull and the canon of the church by Luther at Wittemberg.

In the 4th verse the prophet says : *And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth.* By this description the prophet intends to show the extent of the power of the dragon in the exercise of the civil authority of the empire. Although the Emperor was elective by the seven heads, or Electorates of the empire, yet he frequently exerted a power that was despotic ; he cast them down to the earth ; that is, he threw down the princes of the empire, who were favorable to the Reformation ; extinguishing their prerogatives and sequestering their territories ; they were cast down to the earth, divested of the authority and rank which had given them dignity and sovereignty.

One or two instances of the exercise of such power will suffice to show the meaning of the prophet.

The manifest determination of Charles V. to humble the Protestant princes led them to resist his purposes, and to confederate for their defence.

Frederick, of Saxony, stood at the head of the princes of the empire, and took the lead in defending their rights. Against him the Emperor directed his principal efforts, and succeeded in making Frederick a prisoner. Frederick was brought to immediate trial, before a court-marshal of Spanish and Italian officers, who, founding their charges against him upon a sentence of condemnation previously pronounced against him by the sole authority of Charles, and destitute of every legal formality which could render it valid. By this court was Frederick of Saxony pronounced guilty of treason, and condemned to suffer death. Thus was the greatest prince in the empire judged and condemned by his enemies, who were appointed to try him by the Emperor, no less his enemy. The sentence was not carried into execution, however, owing to the importunities of his wife. But his dignities and ter-

ritories were seized, and conferred, by sentence of Charles, upon another.

The Langrave of Hesse was likewise singled out by the Emperor, from amongst those of the Protestant league, as a proper subject of his despotic vengeance. "But becoming "alarmed at the fate of the Elector of Saxony, the Lan-"grave threw himself at the feet of the Emperor, and sub-"mitted to such terms as might be imposed upon him. "Charles, having now in his power the two greatest princes "of the empire, carried them about with him in triumph; "and having humbled all whom he had not attached to his "interest, proceeded to exercise the rights of a conqueror. "He ordered his troops to seize the artillery and military "stores of all who had been members of the Smalkaldic "League, and he levied, by his sole authority, large sums, as "well upon those who had served him with fidelity, as upon "such as had appeared in arms against him. His brother, "Ferdinand, tyrannized with still more severity over his Bohe-"mian subjects, who had taken arms in support of their civil "and religious liberties. He stripped them of all their ancient "privileges, and loaded them with oppressive taxes. All "Germany was filled with astonishment at the tyrannical "conduct of the Emperor, and the princes who had hitherto "contributed to his aggrandisement, began to tremble for "their own safety, and to take measures for preventing the "danger."

Similar instances of despotic power are recorded in the reign of Ferdinand II., when the Protestant princes of the empire met with the same violence, and lost their dignity and territories in like manner as those did who had attempted to vindicate Protestant rights in Germany, fifty years before.

This despotic power, and overthrow of the princes, the prophet informs us, was the mark of the dragon's *tail*. In order to perceive the force of this figure, we must look at the German Empire at that time, in its two-fold aspect. It was a great civil power, swayed and stimulated by a religious

power. The latter is always spoken of as pre-eminent and superior to the former, as heaven is superior to earth. That which is *inferior* is meant when the prophet speaks of the *tail;* as the interests of civil government are secondary, or inferior to the great interests of religion. The civil power of the empire was, therefore, the tail alluded to. In this aspect the empire embraced many stars: the various inferior sovereignties which composed it, and, as we have seen, sometimes it cast them down to earth.

Some of these occurrences have already been noticed, which led to the casting out of the dragon and his angels; but a more particular review of them will serve to make the fulfillment of this part of the prophecy more apparent.

Charles V. was employed during nearly the whole of his reign either in foreign wars or in attempts to suppress the Reformation at home. His empire was almost constantly a troubled sea that seldom knew a calm. It was in one of those alternations from war to religion, when his appetite for the former became satiated, and he desired a different repast, that Charles appointed the imperial Diet at *Spires*, to take into consideration the state of religion.

"The Diet, after much deliberation, confirmed the edict "published at Worms, against Luther, and prohibited any "further innovations in religion, but particularly the aboli-"tion of the mass; until the meeting of a general council. "Against this decree, the Elector of Saxony, the Landgrave "of Hesse, and the Prince of Anhalt, with fourteen imperial "cities, entered a solemn *protest:* from this measure arose "the appellation of *Protestants*, as distinguishing those "Christians who are opposed to the Church of Rome. The "Diet next assembled at Augsburg, where what is known as "the Augsburgh Confession, embracing the views of Chris-"tian doctrine as entertained by Protestants, was presented "and read, and after a slight examination was condemned. "The Protestant princes and states perceived their danger, "and determined to prepare for consequences which they

" saw approaching. They assembled at *Smalkalde*, and en-
" tered into a league for their mutual defence."

Further measures against them were, however, suddenly arrested, by the appearance of the whole force of the Turkish empire, which just then invaded Hungary, under Solyman II.,—1532.

Charles knew that he must have the force of his empire to meet and resist the bold encroachments of the Turks, and without the Protestants his army would not be equal to the emergency. He was therefore compelled to smooth over the edict of Spire, and the contumacious rejection of the Protestant confession at Augsburgh, in the best way he could. But the Protestants saw that they now had the emperor in as great a difficulty as that which he had recently placed them in, and they resolved to withhold their aid unless proper concessions were made to their religion.

The emperor had no time to convene another Diet, and without delay he issued an edict granting the free exercise of religion to all his Protestant subjects. By the timely invasion of Hungary, the measures which had been commenced against the Protestants were thus arrested and counteracted, the dragon and his angels were defeated in their plans, and the first instance occurred in which *the* EARTH HELPED THE WOMAN ! The prophecy that *the earth helped the woman*, does not refer to one isolated case ; it is a continuous help, springing up under different circumstances and in different quarters.

It will be as well just here to explain what the prophet means by the term *earth*, which he applies to the powers that helped the woman. It is used to distinguish a *power* that is merely secular—entirely devoid of the Christian religion in its proper gospel sense. The governments that profess and uphold the Reformation are distinguished by the term heaven ; those that oppose and persecute it, by the term *earth*. In the present case the earth that helped the woman was the *Turkish Empire*. We shall presently see other governments

rendering most important help in time of equal, if not greater necessity. But to return to the measures of the emperor.

Solyman II. was compelled to retire from Hungary, and the emperor again beheld his empire without an invading foe. But his warlike spirit had become aroused, and with the great preparation he had made to meet Solyman, he could not quietly settle down again without a fight with some one, and he threw his forces upon the African coasts, to chastise the piratical states which were then giving the commerce of Europe much trouble. From this disastrous enterprise, as it turned out to be, he soon became engaged in a war with his old competitor, Francis I. of France. Ten or twelve years were consumed in this sort of pastime, when the emperor turned his attention again to the state of religion in his empire.

The measures now adopted looked more resolute and determined against the Protestants than any which he had previously taken. Charles entered into a treaty with the Pope (Paul III.) for the extirpation of heresy; or, in other words, for the total expulsion of Protestantism from the German Empire! Here the dragon appears fully armed with the seven heads and ten horns! After granting to all his Protestant subjects, by an imperial decree, the free and full enjoyment of their religion, such a measure as he now concerted with the Pope could not do less than rouse their indignation, and determine them to meet the fearful emergency with their utmost powers, and with an unshaken trust in God. And in the end this formidable move against the Protestants turned out to be one of those occasions which were of such frequent occurrence in the history of God's ancient people, the Jews, where the season of their greatest peril was made the occasion of their greatest triumph and exaltation.

The Protestants, having discovered this alliance between the emperor and the Pope, proclaimed their determination neither to be driven from their religious opinions nor to sur-

render their civil rights; and to maintain both, the Smalkaldic league soon organized an imposing army.

The league had privately concluded an alliance with France, and at the same time that they proclaimed their purpose to defend their religious and civil rights, the French king, Henry II., published a manifesto, in which he took upon himself the title of protector of the liberties of Germany and of its captive princes, still held by Charles as prisoners.

France was not led to this alliance with the Smalkaldic league from any respect that she entertained for Protestantism, but from motives of state policy unfriendly to the House of Austria.

The command of the Protestant forces was committed to Prince Maurice, a man of courage and sagacity ; and so rapid were his movements, and so skillfully were his plans laid, that before the emperor was aware of his designs, he came up with him while he lay at Insprunck, and was very nigh making him his prisoner. Charles, with great difficulty, made his escape over the mountains, his baggage and camp treasure falling into the hands of the Protestant army.

When the emperor had to fly before the arms of his Protestant subjects, and France insulted him by announcing herself the protector of the liberties of Germany, his great power was sensibly shaken, and he felt the necessity of conducting himself differently towards his Protestant subjects, and of pursuing a more liberal and conciliatory course in relation to their interests.

All the measures he had devised for the extirpation of heresy, as it was called, were abandoned; and Charles entered into the famous treaty of *Passau* with his Protestant subjects. The woman was helped again in this achievement by the earth,—that is, by France.

By this treaty large concessions were made to Protestantism ; civil and religious liberty was secured to Protestants, and for fifty years they continued in the quiet possession of those rights.

By this religious pacification, and the subsequent treaties of Prague and Westphalia, *the dragon and his angels were cast out!* and their place or authority was no more seen in the empire, as it was before this great change in its religious state took place.

It was natural enough that there should be great rejoicing in heaven when the dragon and his angels were cast out! The reasons for this rejoicing are stated by the prophet in the 10th verse: *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven*—(the Protestant portion of Christendom)—*Now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ, for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God day and night.*

The loud voice that announced this joyful intelligence was the treaty of Passau, which sounded over the whole empire, emancipating Protestantism from the shackles and bondage with which the edict of Worms and Spire bound it.

Salvation, the kingdom of God, and the power of Christ, in converting and saving men, were now the subjects of free and open discussion and instruction! In a word, the gospel was now preached throughout the empire, without fear of papal bulls or imperial tyranny—*for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and right; therefore rejoice, ye heavens,* (that is, all Protestant countries,) *and ye that dwell in them.*

It is hardly necessary to say, that Protestantism was the constant object of vindictive persecution by Popery. The history of the Inquisition, of the Waldenses, and the Albigenses, and the Huguenots, are the records of blood which show the accusations made day and night against them! And all this was done in the name of *religion!*—in the name of God! In this way they were accused before God, unceasingly.

And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child. This is a plain and simple statement of the course

pursued by the persecuting religious power which had hitherto inflamed and controlled the German empire. Its powers were now arrested in that empire, it was cast out, and had to seek new means, and other fields in which to exercise its native malignity. It was still bent upon destroying the woman; and the woman which brought forth the man-child became the first object of this new plan of vindictive operations. It was by the birth of the man-child that the prophet distinguishes the woman in England from the woman in other countries. England then was the first object of Popish persecution, after its powers were cast out of Germany.

The Spanish head of the dragon, by means of the famous Spanish Armada, armed with everything necessary for the civil and religious subjugation of England, made its grand attempt upon that Protestant country; but it failed. England was covered by a power which the dragon could not see, any more than the Syrian host seeking the life of Elisha could see the horses and chariots of fire which covered the mountain and defended the prophet of God in Dothan. The dragon was not allowed to touch the shores, consecrated by the presence and the purity of the woman clothed with the sun. His vast preparations were crushed, driven and scattered like chaff of the summer threshing floor. The reader has seen the result of this attempt to overthrow the government and religion of England in the explanation of the 6th seal.

The treaty of Passau was concluded in 1558, and about twenty-five years after this attempt was made upon England. We must not suppose that the great enemy of Protestantism was all that while in a state of inaction; that could not be. Although it was not seen, after it was cast out of Germany, acting by any of the great powers of Europe, until it moved Spain to make this attack upon England; it was, nevertheless, constantly engaged in one form or another in different

parts of Europe, opposing, harassing, and disturbing the peace of the woman.

It is no valid objection to this explanation that the attack upon England was made before the period named as that of the birth of the man-child. The prophet speaks of everything as having past ; and it is the *country* he designates by this reference to the birth of the man-child, and not the period of time when the woman was assailed by the dragon. Besides, the mighty sweep of prophecy employs—as its sublime language, not our limited terms of months and years—but it often counts time by centuries, and events by the rise or fall of empires.

From the 12th verse to the conclusion of the chapter, the prophet is describing the efforts of the dragon to destroy the woman ; and it is evident that he speaks of the woman, or the Church of Christ, under three different forms or varieties of condition, signifying the three principal strongholds of the Reformation : these were England, Germany, and France.

When he alludes to the Church in England he designates her as the woman that brought forth the man-child. This has already been noticed. His next reference is to the Church in Germany. He speaks of this, in the largest sense, as *the woman.* In Germany the efforts of the Reformation were upon a more extended scale, and embraced a wider range than anywhere else, comprehending several kingdoms and states of the empire. The third and last reference to the woman in this chapter is to her existence in France, where the prophet speaks of her as the *remnant* of her *seed,* which keep the commandment of God.

The term remnant, I have before remarked, is peculiarly adapted to express the Church of Christ in France. It not only implies a very small amount in comparison with the great bulk of anything, but in the present instance it signifies a want of strength or defence. This was the true condition of Protestantism in France. The government was always its enemy. Whatever favor was shown, it was not from any re-

gard to its principles, but from motives of policy. It had no hold upon the affections of the government. The Church of Christ in France was an orphan, without father or mother; it was but a feeble remnant.

The idea of feebleness and exposure to injury is further expressed by the metaphor of *seed*—the seed of the woman. The metaphor applies well to Protestantism in France at the time alluded to. The seed was cast upon an uncongenial soil; it had no depth of earth, it could make no vigorous growth, and of course could not reach any considerable perfection as a religious system. It was always feeble, frequently injured by storms of persecution, such as have been already noticed in the treatment received by Protestants in France, and finally it was cast out of the field altogether. Its failure to attain any considerable growth is not to be ascribed to the seed itself ; the seed was good enough. The text says : *They keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.* But the soil was not congenial ; the seed could not strike its roots deep into its bosom, and become a great tree in that nation. The government and the established Catholic religion of the country were both enemies to the Protestant religion.

But let us return, and with the prophet follow the course of the dragon.

The woman that brought forth the man-child, we have seen, was safe enough; she was clothed with the sun. But the woman of the German Empire was still exposed to the assaults of the dragon ; and that he might destroy her, the serpent, synonymous with the dragon, (verse 16,) cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. History will explain this flood to us.

Germany had enjoyed a season of comparative tranquillity from the time that Charles V. resigned the imperial crown to the death of Rodolph II., a period of more than fifty

years, running through the reign of three emperors, all of whom were peaceably disposed.

This almost uninterrupted tranquillity for so long a time was a happy circumstance for Protestantism. The faithful and persevering labors of her ministers gave an impetus and strength to the Reformation, which prepared it for the last gigantic effort of the dragon, in his effort to carry away the woman by the flood, which he cast out of his mouth. Indeed, so greatly had the power and influence of the Protestants increased in the empire, that Matthias, who succeeded Rodolph II., the last of the three peaceful emperors, found it expedient to affect a decided friendship for their cause, in order the better to succeed in his policy of securing the succession to his family.

This imperial duplicity, however, was laid aside when Matthias supposed he had fully established his selfish policy, and his measures soon convinced the Protestants that it was the aggrandisement of his family, and not the interests of Protestants, he sought.

The measures of Matthias threatened the liberties of the Protestants, and greatly alarmed the Evangelical Union. His arbitrary course produced a revolt of the Hungarian and Bohemian Protestants. "Thus was kindled," says the historian, "a furious civil war, which desolated Germany "during thirty years, interested all the powers of Europe, "and was not finally extinguished until the peace of West-"phalia." This was the flood, cast out of the serpent's mouth after the woman.

I am aware that a very different mode of explaining this part of the prophesy has the authority of commentators, distinguished for their learning, but, in my humble judgment, they totally fail in their efforts to harmonize the text and the facts which they rely upon to illustrate it.

The irruption of the barbarian hordes upon Rome was not a flood directed against *Christian* Rome; for the plain reason, that these barbarians knew nothing at all about Christi-

anity ; and, therefore, could not be impelled by any hostility to its doctrines or its practice. The splendid temple of Pagan idolatry, and the more simple appearance of the Christian sanctuary, were all one in the eye of the Goth and the Vandal, as to their religion ; and if one was more likely than the other to feel the violence of the savage invader, it would be—not the woman, or the Christian Church in Rome —but the more gorgeous temples of Paganism, as presenting a richer prize. The object of the barbarian was not the suppression of Christianity—it was plunder ! The wealth and profusion of Rome drew them from their mountains and morasses, until finally they were themselves conquered by the luxury and ease of Roman life, and gradually adopted its civilization and habits ; fell in with, and were absorbed by the Roman population. This has been cited as explaining that part of the prophesy which says : *And the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood !* I hope to be able to produce a more consistent explanation.

This way of going back to Rome and Jerusalem for explanations of the prophet, after he has reached the 17th and 18th century in his announcements of the events of the church and of the governments of the world, is, at least, a departure from the current of prophesy ; and whoever goes back in this way to find illustrations of his meaning, will not have the company of the prophet himself. The first trumpet proclaimed the catastrophe that put an end to the glory of Rome, and the prophet refers to it no more after that.

I have said that the thirty years' war which ended in the peace of Westphalia was the flood alluded to by the prophet ; let us now examine its history, not in its details, of course, but so far only as will show the true character of this epoch to have been the flood that was cast out of the mouth of the serpent to carry away the woman.

We have seen that the measures of the Emperor Matthias introduced this flood ; but he died not long after, and was succeeded by his cousin, Ferdinand II., A. D. 1619. The

work of flooding Europe with war could not have fallen into fitter hands. The Bohemian Protestants continued their revolt against the oppressive measures of the late emperor, which were not only maintained, but were made more oppressive by Ferdinand II.

The Protestant forces were joined by those of Silesia, Moravia, and Upper Austria, and were supported by an army of German Protestants. Ferdinand was assisted by the Catholic princes of the empire, the King of Spain and the Archduke Albert; and he soon overpowered the Protestants. His success determined him not to be emperor only, but to make himself a master, whose arbitrary will should be above the laws of the empire. In pursuance with this haughty purpose, Ferdinand resolved upon certain changes in the civil and ecclesiastical condition of his government; which, he was well aware, would not be submitted to without a desperate struggle. Having disposed of many obstacles, that seemed to stand in his way to the exercise of that unlimited power upon which he had fixed his aim, "Ferdinand now thought the time was come "for realizing that idea which he had long cherished, of re-"ducing the electoral princes to the condition of grandees "of Spain, and the bishops to the state of imperial chap-"lains. Sensible, however, of the danger of alarming both "religions at once, he resolved to begin with the Protestants; "and, accordingly, issued an edict, ordering them to restore, "without loss of time, all the benefices and church lands "which they had held since the peace of Passau."

I quote the language of the historian, and the history shows that this edict was a violent rupture of the treaty of Passau, aiming a death-blow at the rights which Protestants held under that treaty.

This new measure applied to both Catholics and Protestants, to a certain extent. It changed the electoral princes in their political character, and placed them upon the grade of grandees of Spain. The bishops too were to

be reduced to the state of imperial chaplains; but the *edict of restitution* was to throw its greatest weight upon the Protestants.

The Protestant princes remonstrated against the *edict of restitution*, denying the right of the emperor to command such restitution, or, in other words, to perpetrate such an outrage upon the treaty of Passau. They claimed their right to be heard in a general diet. The emperor found it necessary to pause when a diet was demanded by princes who held such exalted stations in his empire, and accordingly a diet was held at Ratisbon. The greater part of the Catholic princes in the diet advised the emperor to mitigate his measures towards Protestants, doubtless regarding the edict of restitution as a dangerous experiment upon the liberties of that portion of his subjects, and which might open the way to measures against the Catholic princes themselves that would not be agreeable. But this advice did not suit the temper of Ferdinand any more than it accorded with the hostile feelings of the ecclesiastical electors against Protestantism. Those ecclesiastical electors, it should be observed, were of much higher authority than the princes who were not electors. They strenuously opposed the advice of those princes who inclined to the just rights of the Protestants, and they took sides with the emperor. These electors were a part of the *seven heads* of the dragon, and had three votes out of the seven which elected the emperor—seven being the number of the electoral college, as established by the "Golden Bull" of Charles IV. of Germany. These three electors were the Archbishops of Mentz, of Cologne, and of Triers. They embodied the official religious power of the empire. With the concurrence of these three heads, Ferdinand was inflexibly determined to execute the edict, and he had a hundred and fifty thousand troops at his command to crush all opposition.

Now the flood was cast out of the mouth of the serpent, and its billows began to swell and roar around the woman.

The Protestants firmly resolved to resist the edict. Al-

though they were sensible that they could not stand before the power of the emperor, yet they trusted in God for help in their time of need, *and the earth helped the woman.*

"The Protestants secretly formed an alliance with Gus-"tavus Adolphus, King of Sweden," who readily embraced the opportunity which their necessities presented of signalizing his great military genius in a war with the renowned Ferdinand II. It was in this war that Gustavus displayed "those heroic qualities which will ever be the admiration of "mankind."

"The motives," says the historian, "which chiefly induced "Gustavus to take arms against the head of the empire were "*the love of glory* and zeal for the Protestant religion. Pro-"testants from England and Scotland, and Holland, flocked "to his standards to support the Protestant cause, *and to* "*seek renown* under the champion of their religion."

It is apparent that the motives which chiefly brought the greatest help to the woman were of an earthly or carnal kind. The prophet says, or implies, that important assistance was brought to the woman by those whose principles were not in accordance with her own. They were impelled by worldly ambition—they sought earthly glory; but still they rendered most important help to the woman. In this way the woman derived from France, indirectly, the most effectual aid.

Cardinal Richelieu, prime minister of Louis XIII., in every sense of the term, was the constant enemy of the Protestants. But this sagacious minister saw that he might turn the war between Gustavus and Ferdinand to his own advantage. His unconquerable hostility to the House of Austria was gratified with this opportunity of avenging itself for former injuries, real or imaginary, which France had received from Austrian ambition. Richelieu at once entered into stipulations with Gustavus to furnish an annual subsidy of more than a million of livres to support the war against Ferdinand. This was a powerful help to the woman, and it came entirely from the *earth;* it sprang from a principle of revenge, and from the

coffers of a nation whose chief minister himself proffered the aid, and was the untiring foe of Protestantism!

These facts elucidate the meaning of the prophet when he tells us the *earth helped* the woman. He does not mean that all the assistance which was brought to the aid or help of the German Protestants was of this kind ; he only means to say that people and kingdoms helped the woman, though they were not led to do so from any regard to the Protestant religion. It is quite certain that the army of Gustavus was materially strengthened from England and Holland by men whose holy ardor led them to make every sacrifice to help their oppressed brethren of Germany.

Everything being properly prepared and judiciously arranged by Gustavus, he threw himself upon the great warfield of Germany, and near Leipsic met the imperial army under Count Tilly, a skillful officer and a brave general. This first battle was to make the greatest impression upon Europe, and it was fought with desperate courage on both sides. Victory crowned the arms of Gustavus and the defeat of the brave Tilly threw Ferdinand into consternation, while it inspired the Protestants with the greatest confidence in the success of their cause. I shall not follow the tide of battle. The woman is now struggling with the flood, and all that I am concerned about is, to show how she was delivered from it.

The fatal battle of Lutzen closed the life of the great Gustavus. Here he fell whilst executing prodigies of valor. Whilst lying on the field mortally wounded, surrounded by scores of his brave officers and soldiers in the same deplorable condition, while the battle still furiously raged around them, it was demanded of him by one of the enemy who he was. "I am the King of Sweden," Gustavus heroically replied, "and I seal with my blood the Protestant religion and the "liberties of Germany."

The fall of Gustavus threw the Protestants into as great consternation as the emperor had experienced at the defeat

of Tilly; and the waves of the flood dashed with increased violence against the woman.

However, Sweden still lifted up a standard to which the Protestant hope might cling. Oxenstiern was appointed by the Swedish Council of Regency to conduct the war. The alliance was renewed with France, and new vigor was imparted to the Swedish armies by their able generals. Numerous battles were fought with various results; the victory was now on one side and then on the other; so equal were the forces and the skill of the opposing commanders, that it appeared impossible to say what the final result would be. However, the great battle of Nordlingen changed the circumstances of the war entirely. In this memorable battle the Swedish army was totally defeated, and the hopes of the Protestants were prostrated. The emperor, taking advantage of their despondency, proposed terms of reconciliation to his Protestant subjects much more liberal than their fallen hopes led them to suppose would have been offered. A treaty or pacification was agreed upon by the emperor and the Evangelical Union, and signed at *Prague.* This was the treaty of Prague, which guaranteed the free exercise of the Protestant religion in all the dominions of the empire, except the kingdom of Bohemia, and the provinces belonging to the House of Austria. The benefices they held by the treaty of Passau were secured to them in perpetuity; and those acquired after, within a certain period, they were to enjoy for forty years.

This treaty of Prague *took the woman out of the flood!* the war between the emperor and his Protestant subjects was now at an end.

And we must here remark, that there is quite a distinction between the *help* which was given to the woman by the earth, and the swallowing up of the flood by the earth. The help has been already noticed, and fully remarked upon. It was this help that kept Protestantism from being swept out of the German Empire; and it was the fear that this help

might, by some means or other be greatly increased, by the sympathy which he saw was gathering around the cause of Protestantism, that led Ferdinand to seize the moment of their depression, and offer the Protestants terms as favorable as those embraced in the treaty of Prague. I believe all writers upon the Apocalypse have fallen into the same error, of supposing that the *help* given to the woman was the act of swallowing up the flood by the earth! this, I apprehend, is quite a mistake. The flood was not swallowed up until after the woman had been secured from its pressing dangers. The treaty of Prague took her out of the flood; and afterwards, the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood!

The comprehensive brevity of the prophet is peculiar to himself; there is nothing like it anywhere else in the Bible. His Apocalypse is a compendium of sententious declarations, from which men are to draw out, by study, inquiry and various research, the true meaning of his sayings. The brevity of his description of this flood, giving its origin, its design, and its end, is very remarkable. I shall dilate upon what he has said of it, in order to show where it occurred and how it proceeded.

The flood represents the furious war that arose out of Ferdinand's attempt to oppress and tyrannize over the Protestants of Germany. It was cast out of the mouth of the serpent. What was the serpent? No one in the Diet of Ratisbon, at all favorable to the Protestant interest, could have advocated the measures of the emperor. Indeed they were opposed or advised against, by some of the Catholic princes, as impolitic at that time. The edict of Restitution, which originated the war, would not have been sustained if the three Ecclesiastical Electors had not most strenuously advocated it. These three electors held three-sevenths, or nearly one-half the votes of the electoral college which elected the emperors; and they may be considered as the *mouth* of

the Catholic part of the empire, in all the diets, and in all the discussion of measures appertaining to religion.

If these three electors had objected to the unjust measures of the emperor, there would have been no flood! Ferdinand would not have dared to enforce his edict of Restitution against the general sentiment or judgment of the empire. But the three Catholic electors approved and counseled the execution of the edict! thus *the serpent opened his mouth and cast out the flood after the woman!*

The serpent is referred to in the 15th verse, to express the agent, or power, that let out the flood. It opened its mouth in the Diet of Ratisbon, that is, it approved, advised, and urged the execution of the edict against the Protestants. But in the next verse it is said, *the dragon cast out the flood out of his mouth.* The serpent and the dragon, therefore, are identical in principle and spirit, but are distinct in power. The serpent opens his mouth in the diet, advises and urges the measure, and the dragon, that controls the vast military power of the empire, gives action and direction to the flood; executes the measure which had been sanctioned and counseled by the diet.

The prophet, after briefly adverting to the flood and its object, with still greater brevity adds, *and the earth helped the woman*, as much as to say, but the woman was not carried away by the flood; she was helped or delivered from it by the earth. History confirms this, and shows that the hostile purpose of the emperor against the Protestants did not prevail, and the reason was, because he was opposed and thwarted by Sweden and France; and, after several years of war and bloodshed, he withdrew his edict, and made the treaty of Prague with his Protestant subjects.

But what became of the flood? The treaty of Prague did not disperse it; that only lifted the woman out of it. What became of it? The prophet answers the question with his singular brevity, and says: *The earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood.*

History will show us how this was done, although the historian never dreamed that he was expounding the Revelation, while he was intent only upon handing down to posterity the deeds of kingdoms and empires of former times, any more than the people themselves, who were the actors in those mighty scenes, thought that they were accomplishing the very things which it had been predicted fifteen hundred years before they would accomplish.

When the Protestants, by the treaty of Prague, ended their quarrel with the emperor, and retired from the war, Sweden and France took it upon their own hands, and continued it with increased energy.

By the withdrawal of the Protestant forces, Ferdinand had it in his power to oppose a stronger front to Oxenstiern. The Swede found it necessary to add greatly to the numbers of his troops, or he would be crushed. In order to obtain this needful assistance, Oxenstiern entered into a new treaty with France, resting upon quite a different ground from that of the first alliance, which was merely to provide a certain amount of money.

From feelings of jealousy and motives of policy, the first treaty or alliance with France went no further than providing the subsidy. The politic and far-seeing Richelieu was jealous of the increasing fame of Gustavus, and did not care to do more than supply the money to keep up his army upon something like an equality with the emperor's. Richelieu was fearful that if he sent Gustavus a powerful auxiliary in French troops he would easily overrun Germany, and might then turn his attention to other objects not so congenial with the cardinal's wishes. These suspicions, however, by the death of Gustavus, were wholly removed from the mind of Richelieu; but similar fears with regard to France sprung up in the mind of Oxenstiern, who became apprehensive that if a large body of French troops were brought into Germany, they might possess themselves of some of its strong points, and maintain them after the present war.

To avoid such a consequence, he determined to continue the war with the emperor with such forces as he then had; but the disastrous battle of Nordlingen discovered to Oxenstiern the fact that, without the aid of France, he would inevitably be overwhelmed by the emperor. "He at once of-"fered to put Louis XIII. immediately in possession of Phil-"lipsburgh and Alsace, on condition that France should take "an active part in the war against the emperor. Richelieu "readily embraced a proposal that corresponded so entirely "with his views, and he began to levy troops with great dili-"gence, and *five* considerable armies were soon in the "field."*

I have followed the flood thus far in order to show how it was swallowed up by the earth. It had its commencement in motives of a *religious* kind; it was cast out of the mouth of the serpent for the purpose of destroying the woman; but by the help of other powers who joined the war against the emperor, not from religious motives at all, but from purely *earthly* policy, such as conquest, or the glory of successful battle, the woman was delivered from the flood. The religious motives which first gave rise to it no longer existed, and the flood, or the war, was continued upon quite a different ground, as is seen by the treaty with France. It now rested upon state policy, mere *earthly motives.* These became the absorbing and impulsive principles that continued the war—they swallowed up the flood.

For about twelve years after the treaty of Prague the war continued to rage with great violence. It shook all Europe, and interested all its governments, until the peace of Westphalia silenced its angry billows. This was the most important treaty that ever had been made in Europe. It not only settled upon a lasting foundation great political principles, which afterwards became the guide and government of the nations, but it also established the rights of the Pro-

* Russell.

testant religion upon a basis from which they have never since been removed, and gave a wider scope and more extended influence to Protestantism than ever it had experienced before; and all this grew out of the despotic measures of Catholic Germany to crush Protestantism in that empire.

Defeated in his efforts against the woman in England, and then again in Germany, the dragon becomes exceedingly angry—*was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed*—(17th verse.) This third attempt was made upon the Huguenots, or the Protestants of France The dragon succeeded in this effort. He easily tore up the small remnant, and cast away the unprotected seed, which was but slightly rooted in the soil of France.

The civil and religious power were here, as they were in Germany, so united and combined as to present one power—the great red dragon.

Instigated by its natural appetite for Protestant blood, the dragon fell upon the Huguenots with merciless fury. The edict of Nantes, which was the only show of protection that Protestantism had in France, was suddenly repealed by Louis XIV., in 1686. A torrent of wild persecution was let loose upon the Huguenots; they were hunted out of France, and compelled to seek a home in foreign lands and amongst strangers. All Protestant countries gladly received them, and amongst their brethren of the same faith the seed speedily took root, and grew up in great strength and beauty in the field of the Lord. Everywhere they went they carried with them the light and life of the Protestant religion, and produced amongst the nations that received them the good fruits, which the true seed of the woman will always bring forth in a congenial soil.

This triumph of the dragon was attended with worse consequences to his cause than it could possibly have experienced if he had suffered the Huguenots to remain in France. Their dispersion became the means of strengthening and spreading the Protestant religion wherever they went, while,

at the same time, the skill and industry, for which they were proverbial, were lost to the people of France.

The dragon had a hard time of it, any way. Whenever he was defeated, his cause suffered by it, and if he succeeded, it suffered quite as much from the success he met with.

By carefully attending to the current of history, as it passes through the 16th and 17th centuries, it will be seen that all those events which are offered as explanations of the prophecy contained in this chapter, occurred precisely in the order in which the prophet has placed them.

There is one more prophecy in this chapter to be noticed before we leave it. It stands in the 12th verse, and is a warning to the people of great and sore troubles at hand.

The prophet had just called upon the dwellers in the heavens to rejoice in the overthrow of *the accuser of the brethren,* and because of the same event, he now warns the inhabitants of earth and sea in the following language: *Woe to the inhabiters of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.*

The progress of the Reformation in different countries, and the increasing power of the Protestant religion, was manifested by the three treaties already referred to, the treaty of Passau, of Prague, and of Westphalia.

The devil is represented as being in great wrath at this evidence of his declining power. He sees that the Reformation, now so rapidly undermining his throne, must ultimately put him in chains; and while he despairs of being able to arrest its course, he resolves, devil-like, to do all the mischief he can, during the short time that yet remains to him. For this purpose he sets about kindling the fires of war, until he puts all Europe in a flame.

Shortly after the peace of Westphalia, Louis XIV. assumed the powers of monarchy on the throne of France. He at once betrayed an appetite for war, and a determination to be master in Europe.

He led off in the work of convulsing Europe with new scenes of bloodshed. Its fields were covered with armies, its cities and towns were battered and torn by bombardment, or destroyed by fire ; as in the instance of the Palatine, where the elector was compelled to witness five of his principal cites and twenty-five towns in flames at one time by the torch of the French soldiery.

Those scenes of barbarity, in the wanton destruction of property, were still surpassed by the sacking of cities and the revolting cruelties practised upon their defenceless inhabitants. Besides these calamities, consequent upon the presence and rage of an unbridled soldiery, a severe famine broke out, chiefly in France, and spread its terrors very extensively. In short, such was "the progress of the French power that all Europe was filled with alarm and consternation." This was the state of the dwellers on the *earth.*

About the same time, too, commenced those desperate naval conflicts between England, and France, and Holland, for the supremacy of the sea.

Vast navies rushed together in furious combat, and drowned the voice of the tempest by the thunder of their broadsides. They grappled each other, and fought and struggled amidst blazing ships, until the fire reached the magazine, when, bursting forth, it scattered ships and combatants in promiscuous fragments over the sea. Turks and Christians, Papists and Protestants, wallowed in each other's blood on the battle field, and monsters of the deep were feasted with the mangled corpses of men which these naval conflicts gave to the seas.

This looks like the work of the devil ! The lineaments of its parentage are so visibly impressed upon it that none can mistake it. The wonder is, that beings of such an exalted rank in the creation of God, as that which man occupies, should ever have thought of seeking glory and immortality in such employment.

Well might the prophet announce a woe to the inhabiters

of the earth and the sea, when his far-seeing eye glanced upon those scenes.

Those fires, kindled by Louis the XIV., were not extinguished by his death; they continued burning along through Europe with greater or less intensity, according as the passions of men, which fed them, were more or less excited, until they reached the magazine charged with the elements of the French Revolution. The first spark blew this up, and scattered its fires over the nations. All Europe was again in a blaze of war, and the world trembled from the effects of the terrible explosion.

This was the great outburst of those passions and principles generated by the monstrous union of a corrupt hierarchy with despotic governments, and which had been growing and gaining strength for so many ages.

After the short time had passed in which the devil gave such fearful evidence of his great wrath, a wonderful change came over the governments of the earth. A state of tranquillity succeeded the storm, and all Christendom wore a new and tranquil face.

The four great monarchies of Europe who had been actively engaged in the preceding century in raising and directing the storms of war, all at once became the conservators of the public peace, proclaiming to the nations that wars should cease.

What produced this union of the four great powers that had been so often in deadly conflict with each other before? It was the influence, the moral force which the Reformation had acquired and exercised over the people. At this time the Reformation had been for near three centuries gradually making its way amongst the kingdoms of Europe, and it now arrested the progress of war by the agency of these four great powers.

This termination of that system which had made Europe little else than a human slaughter-house for hundreds of years, was the great turning point in the history of Christianity,

and gave a new direction to the feelings and purposes of men most favorable to their best interests.

Protestantism had ever before been struggling against the hosts of civil despotism and superstitious bigotry, often beaten back, and, to human appearance, frequently broken down beyond the hope of recovery. But the day of her deliverance at length arrives, peace throws open the fields of the world to her, and she goes forth like the sower, sowing the gospel seed broadcast amongst the nations.

I have now given my views of the meaning of the twelfth chapter of the Revelation—a most wonderful compendium it is, too, of the civil and religious history of the era to which it belongs. It must have struck the reader with surprise that the prophet gives no account of the origin of this great red dragon. The vast and complicated events that were brought out under its power and influence, the great reach of its authority, and the means at its command to effect its stupendous purposes, give force and intensity to the interest which all must feel to know where the dragon came from.

On this occasion the prophet was under some sort of necessity of anticipating the order of historical prophecies. When the great wonder in heaven of the woman clothed with the sun arose before his vision, the other wonder of the great red dragon appeared at the same time, and he was led at once to disclose the events which grew out of the collision between the two. Having done this, the prophet now returns to give us the origin of the great red dragon, which he does in the thirteenth chapter, but under quite a different figure.

It must be premised, in order to a clear understanding of the two chapters, and to avoid confusion, that the dragon form of the beast designates its religious character, while its political character is the chief subject of description in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE BEAST WITH SEVEN HEADS AND TEN HORNS.

1. *And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.*

2. *And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.*

3. *And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast.*

4. *And they worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshiped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?*

5. *And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things, and blasphemies: and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.*

6. *And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.*

7. *And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.*

8. *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

9. *If any man have an ear let him hear.*

10. *He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.*

The first and second verses of this chapter give a general outline description of the beast, or empire, which arose out of the broken and disordered fragments of the ancient Roman Empire.

The French monarchy became the nucleus around which those remains were gathered, and Charlemagne was the monarch who gave them the form and order of an empire.

The history of France, during the Merovingian race is, for the most part, the history of a feeble and impotent race of kings. Their reign was abruptly brought to a close by Pepin, who usurped the sovereignty in 751.

The beast that is introduced in the first verse commenced his rise under the reign of Pepin, who introduced the Carlovingian dynasty: but it did not assume any of those remarkable features pointed out by the prophet, until the sovereignty passed into the hands of Charlemagne, the son and successor of Pepin.

Under the reign of Charlemagne, the beast assumed the power and the prerogatives of the new Roman Empire.

The title and the authority of this new empire were conferred by the Pope, and acknowledged by the people of Rome in the following manner:

"On Christmas day, as the king assisted at mass, in St. "Peter's Church, in the midst of the ecclesiastical ceremonies, "the Supreme Pontiff advanced and placed an imperial "crown upon his head. As soon as the people perceived it, "they cried: 'Long life and victory to Charles Augustus, "'crowned by the hand of God! Long live the great and "'pious emperor of the Romans.' During these acclama-"tions, the Pope conducted him to a magnificent throne, "which had been prepared for the purpose, and, as soon as "he was seated, paid him the honors which his predecessors

"had been accustomed to pay to the Roman emperors, de-"claring that instead of the title of Patrician, he should "henceforth style him *Emperor and Augustus!* Leo now "presented him with the imperial mantle, with which, being "invested, Charles returned amidst the acclamations of the "populace to his palace."

This was the act that completed the political character of the beast, and conferred the title and the authority which had distinguished the former emperors of Rome.

The empire was governed by French sovereigns upwards of one hundred and eighty years, and until the death of Louis V., when it passed into the hands of the Germans. The sovereignty of France over the empire then ceased, and her political connection with it ceased also.

The French was the first, as the German was the second stage of the empire ; its *third* stage will be noticed in its proper place. This three-fold aspect of the empire, or the beast, as the prophet terms it, is an important fact, and must be borne in mind in order to a proper understanding of a future reference which will be made to it.

The prophet does not attempt to give a detailed history of any power or monarchy of which he speaks. He merely glances through the extent of its dominion, and lights up with the torch of prophecy only those points that are most remarkable.

I will now proceed to examine and apply the different circumstances to which he refers, in his allusion to this beast.

The first and second verses I will transpose in the order of treatment, as it is the latter that applies to the beast in its French character. The beast did not wear seven heads until it had been about four hundred years under the German authority, as we shall see hereafter.

The first peculiarity to be noticed is the *leopard* appearance of the beast. This has no reference to the natural disposition of that animal, but to the *spots* by which it is distinguished from all other animals. These spots are various in

their size and shade of color, and serve to illustrate the different nations that made up this great empire. Although the spots are all upon one beast, they each have a particular identity which distinguishes it from every other spot, either by its size or shade of color.

The empire, under Charlemagne, was made up of nations of various territorial extent and political power, as well as of various grades of civilization. These different nations were brought under his dominion, but were left in the full enjoyment of their various forms of government, and in everything they did pretty much as they had always been accustomed to do, except in the matter of their religion. In this they were required to submit to the religion of their conqueror. We may readily perceive that an empire formed under such circumstances, would present an appearance of great variety, would in fact be as spotted as a leopard.

This view is authorized by the following declaration of history in regard to the indulgence which Charlemagne extended to the nations conquered by him.

The historian, in his sketch of that remarkable man, says: "Sensible how much mankind in general reverence old customs, and those institutions under which they have lived from their youth, he permitted the inhabitants of all the countries that he conquered to *retain their own laws*, making only such alterations as he judged absolutely necessary for the good of the community."* So much for the leopard feature of the empire—the next peculiarity is its resemblance to the bear.

And his feet were as the feet of a bear. It was quite consistent for the translators to supply the words, *the feet*, which they doubtless supposed was the subject of comparison ; but the true sense of the text would have been better reached without these words, as the feet of the animal are not the subject of comparison, but the qualities or disposition of the animal itself.

* Russell.

Exactly opposite to the sense in which the leopard is referred to, the bear is employed—for his natural disposition, and not for anything peculiar in his feet. The feet are applicable only to the empire of Charlemagne, and are intended to signify the lowest part of it, as the feet are the lowest part of all animals. The lowest order, and the least civilized of the nations under his dominion, are signified by the feet, while their wild, ferocious, and untameable temper and disposition, are illustrated by these well-known qualities of the bear. This view corresponds with the colossal figure in the human form which troubled the dreams of the King of Babylon. The feet of that great image, being part iron and part clay, was explained by Daniel to the monarch as being a fourth kingdom, which, by reason of this mixture, was below or inferior to the kingdoms which were signified by the more elevated parts of the figure, and finally, by reason of this mixture, it fell to pieces. I refer to this merely to show the coincidence of the feet as an illustration of inferiority both in the image of Daniel and this beast of St. John. The feet, as I have said, implies the rudest and least-civilized portion of Charlemagne's empire. These, doubtless, were the Saxons, in combination with other tribes that peopled the morasses of Germany. These were in every respect inferior to the rest, and were also the most difficult portion of the empire to govern.

To a wild and fearless notion of liberty they added a ferocious resistance to the laws and restraints which were imposed for their government : they were untiring and untameable in their resistance to the wholesome regulations of civil government.

Charlemagne was frequently under the necessity of employing the severest measures with them, which for the time seemed to humble them ; but as soon as he was called to some distant part of his empire, his Saxon bears would break out again, and do much mischief before they were subdued. Thus was he kept engaged with them, either beating them

into submission to his laws, or converting them to the Christianity of his day by the sword.

The next peculiarity of the beast is its *mouth*, which the prophet says was as the mouth of a lion. This figure is to be understood as expressing the character of the head and government of the empire. The mouth utters its commands, and when Charlemagne spoke, it was as when the lion roareth in the forest, the beasts everywhere tremble.

The government of the empire was tyrannical : the will of one man wielded its vast powers ; and while he gave the law from his own mouth, he enforced it with his sword.

We now have this great empire spread out before us, in its diversity of nations spotted like the leopard, and in the ferocious and savage state of some of its branches, the uncivilized Saxons, and the equally savage hordes with which they were blended, and lastly the form of its government—all the power and authority in the hands of one man, its laws and regulations uttered from *one mouth*, which it was as dangerous to resist or oppose as it would be to undertake to shut the lion's mouth when he roars in his anger.

But the most important circumstance of all connected with the rise of this beast is next stated by the prophet in these words : *And the dragon gave him his seat and great authority.*

From the first appearance of the dragon down to the time when he cast the flood out of his mouth after the woman to carry her away, a continually-increasing anxiety has been felt to know who the dragon is, what power is symbolized by such a ferocious monster. That inquiry is fully met at this point, and is answered in a manner so full and so direct, as must forever quiet all doubts as to the power referred to by the prophet under the symbol of this fabulous beast.

The prophet says that the *dragon gave his seat to the beast.* This was done by the act of Leo III. The temporal domain of the popedom, distinguished by the name of St. Peter's Patrimony, with which the Pope had been invested by Pepin, was by the voluntary act of Leo III. subjected to the sove-

reignty of Charlemagne. Rome, with all her splendor and renown, was placed under the sceptre of the newly-crowned emperor by the transaction which has just been recited, viz.: the crowning of Charles, when the Pope and all his subjects, both secular and ecclesiastical, were forced to acknowledge themselves the subjects of Charlemagne.

This pageantry of crowning and investing an earthly monarch with secular or worldly dominion and great authority by the Pope, the professed head of the church, was something entirely new.

Pepin had seated the Pope on the throne of temporal power by investing him with the kingdom which he had conquered in Italy. *This was the seat of the dragon, and this seat the dragon gave to the beast.*

But besides this gift of territorial dominion, the prophet says: *The dragon gave the beast great authority.* By this expression he no doubt refers to the *title* which the Pope conferred at the same time upon Charles, styling him "*Emperor and Augustus*," thus conferring equal authority and dignity with that which had ever distinguished the Roman emperors of old.

This is the only instance, or certainly the most remarkable one, in which domain and authority were *conferred* upon Charlemagne. His empire in every other instance had swelled out and spread itself by conquest—it had become great by the sword.

But the Pope, desirous to ally himself with this growing power, which had all Europe under its feet, hastily threw himself into the arms of Charlemagne, and added the dragon to the beast.

This was the point which the prophet aims to exhibit. It was the first instance of the exercise of vast worldly authority by the popedom in bestowing crowns and kingdoms, and it was a strong and indelible mark of the fall of that church from the doctrines and teachings of Christ, who warned his disciples, and through them the whole church, against such

associations and powers, in this emphatic language: *My kingdom is not of this world.* This case is pointed to as evidence of the deep corruption of Christianity at that time, and as opening the door to those scenes of blood and persecution which followed this first step of temporal dominion and authority, claimed and exercised by the head of the Romish Church. It is well known that the popedom subsequently became more distinguished for its temporal dominion and lordly authority over the earth, than for anything else; kingdoms, as well as newly-discovered countries, were common gifts of its lordly bounty. History abounds with such instances.

The dragon and the beast became, after this alliance, the two great powers of earth in the eyes of the people: *And all the world wondered after the beast, and they worshiped the dragon which gave power unto the beast.*

This term worship simply means an acknowledgment of supremacy above all others. Thus the people did homage to the popedom, as possessing power and authority to create empire and confer sovereignty: *And they worshiped the beast* —(for his great military power and conquests)—*saying: who is like unto the beast, who is able to make war with him?* Now we see the dragon and the beast in their united and harmonious state; the first receiving the adoration of men as deriving his powers from heaven, and the second exciting their applause and admiration, as possessing all earthly majesty and power.

We now leave the first stage of the beast while it was under its French emperors, and contemplate it in its German character. Under this aspect it wears seven heads as well as ten horns!

These heads never could have belonged to the beast under its French form, because it was the change that took place in the constitution of the empire under its German emperors that introduced them; still it was the same beast.

My purpose is to keep as close as I can to the prophet,

and I do not mean to pursue the history of the German monarchs as they succeeded each other upon the throne of that empire. I will just remark here, however, that Otho the Great, who was amongst the first of the new order of emperors, and who ascended the throne in 936, was a descendant of those very Saxons whose fierceness and turbulence gave Charlemagne so much trouble only about a century before. It is rather wonderful that in that space of time, a descendant of those Saxons should be qualified to assume the intricate and important duties of emperor, and to conduct the affairs of the empire too with an ability and prudence not inferior to Charlemagne himself. A striking proof is given in his reign, that the Saxon blood possesses a remarkable capability for improvement; and that in the power and success of Otho may be seen a strong indication of the future success and eminence to which the Saxon race have since attained.

But the seven heads are the first subject of inquiry ; constituting, as they do, a very strong feature of the beast. When, and how did they arise ?

The emperors, for a long time, had been elected by the multitude of petty and principal powers within the empire. They generally assembled for that purpose, either in some large city or in the open field. Their proceedings were frequently tumultuous, and continued several days, to the great danger of the peace and order of the empire.

On the election of the Duke of Luxembourgh, to the imperial throne, under the title of Charles IV., the mode of electing the emperor was changed and greatly simplified by the establishment of an electoral college, composed of seven of the most important principalities of the empire. This change in the constitution, regulating the imperial election, was termed the " Golden Bull."

A. D. 1356 was the epoch of this event, which gave the beast his seven heads.

These seven electors were, the Archbishops of Metz, Co-

logne, and Triers ; the King of Bohemia, the Count Palatine, the Duke of Savoy, and the Margrave of Brandenburgh—these were the seven heads of the beast. There is no other beast spoken of by the prophet as having seven heads, and as one of the heads of the beast was wounded to death, it must of necessity be one of these seven heads.

On these heads, the prophet says, was the name of blasphemy ! that is, the title they bore was blasphemous, as applied to them.

Doctor Adam Clarke, in his note on the place, gives a satisfactory exposition of the meaning of the text, and I readily adopt his view : "The name of blasphemy," the doctor remarks, "is very properly said to be upon the seven "heads of the beast, or the seven electorates of the German "empire, because the electors are styled : *Sacri Imperii* "*Principes Electores;* Princes Electors of the *Holy* Empire ; "*Sacri Romani Imperii Electores!* Electors of the *Holy* "Roman Empire."

These were the titles given to the seven heads, and its blasphemy consists in the use of the term *holy*, which can only be applied to that which honors God ; but the heads of the beast were not employed in honoring God ; they united in supporting an idolatrous and tyrannical system of religion.

"A blasphemy," adds Doctor Clarke, "is the prostitution "of a *sacred* name to an unholy purpose." This explanation he very well supports by this declaration of Christ, chap. 2: 9 : *I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.*

The blasphemy of these seven heads consisted in their holding a title of religious sacred import while they were wicked and abominably corrupt ; and for the same reason the *whole empire* was a monster of blasphemy. The title it bore, as stated by the same learned commentator, was, "*Sacrum Im*-"*perium Romanum*"—the Sacred (or holy) Roman Empire.

The prophet next refers to a circumstance that cannot be made applicable to any other power than one of the seven

electors of the German Empire. This is the beast he is describing with its seven heads, and he says: *I saw one of his heads, as it were, wounded to death, and his deadly wound was healed.* He does not say how long it remained in this wounded state; he simply states the fact that it was so wounded, and that the wound was healed.

History will give us an illustration of this part of prophecy more consistent with its tenor than that which has been given by names of high authority as expounders of the prophecies.

In what other way could one of these heads be wounded to death but by striking dumb one of the seven electors, or by abolishing the electorate itself? This was literally the fact; it actually did occur. When the Palatine Elector, Frederick V., was put under the ban of the empire, his powers and honors as elector were wrested from him, and his extensive domain was handed over to another. The history of this event has been mentioned before in the account of Ferdinand II., but not in relation to this part of the prophecy.

The circumstances that led to the deadly wound were briefly these: The Bohemians were firmly opposed to the election of Ferdinand II., and they went so far as to depose him, and elect Frederick V., Elector Palatine, for their king. Frederick unfortunately accepted the Bohemian crown, trusting to the Protestant forces of the empire, and to James I. of England, who was his father-in-law, to sustain him in the possession of his new honors; but James foresaw the danger of such a step, and warned Frederick against it; but the elector resolved to meet the perils of wearing the Bohemian crown, and the consequences were as above stated. I cannot conceive of a more perfect wounding to death than that contained in this history of the extinction of the electorate of Frederick V., one of the seven heads of the beast.

But the deadly wound was healed. The wound was inflicted as a political punishment: it was subsequently healed by state policy.

This healing was effected by the memorable treaty of

Westphalia, which has been before noticed. This treaty was established in 1648, about twenty-five years after the wound was inflicted.

In this comprehensive treaty the former rights of the Elector Palatine were favorably considered, and their restoration provided for—not to take effect all at once, but partially, and ultimately altogether ; so that the perfect restoration of the palatinate was looked to.

It was stipulated by this treaty that the Upper Palatinate should remain with the Duke of Bavaria (upon whom it had been conferred when it was wrested from Frederick V.) and his descendants, as long as he should produce male issue, but that the Lower Palatine should be *restored* to Charles Louis, son of the *deposed elector*, in whose favor shall be established an eighth electorate, to continue till the extinction of the House of Bavaria ; so that the electoral dignity of his father, Frederick V., was *restored* to his son, Charles Louis, together with the full sovereignty of the Lower Palatinate. The Upper Palatinate was also to fall under his dominion when the Duke of Bavaria should cease tohold it by failure of male issue. In the meantime, Charles exercised all the power and enjoyed all the dignity of an elector, just as his father had done before he was put under the ban of the empire. Here is the healing of the deadly wound that had been given to one of the heads of the beast. It is said the wound was given by the sword, (14th verse)—that is, it was the effect of war. The Elector Palatine, as we have already seen, had rebelled against the emperor, and took the crown of Bohemia. He was conquered, and his sovereignty and dignities were extinguished by the sword. This is the history of the wounding and healing of one of the heads of the beast.

But, besides the seven heads, the beast presented also the singular characteristic of wearing *ten horns*. The prophet enters into no explanation of these horns in the chapter before us. He simply remarks in relation to them, that upon these horns were ten crowns, by which we are guarded

against the error of supposing that they were intended to represent anything else than so many civil powers or distinct governments of various grades, both in their territorial ex tent and their improvement or rank in the science of government. Some of them were in a very rude and uncivilized state, while others were more cultivated and enlightened.

In the seventeenth chapter a fuller explanation is given of these horns, beginning with the 12th verse. It is there said to the prophet—*And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet, but received power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast, &c* Surely this language is plain enough, and its import agrees marvelously with the history which it was intended to foreshadow. The ten barbarian kingdoms which sprung up from the vast ruins of the Roman Empire are referred to under the figure of the ten horns. They are given to us in the following order, with their respective names:

1. The kingdom of the Huns; 2. The kingdom of the Ostrogoths; 3. The kingdom of the Visigoths; 4. The kingdom of the Franks; 5. The kingdom of the Vandals; 6. The kingdom of the Sueres and Alans; 7. The kingdom of the Burgundians; 8. The kingdom of the Heruli, Rugii, Scyrri, and other tribes, which composed the Italian kingdom of Odoacer; 9. The kingdom of the Saxons; and, 10. The kingdom of the Lombards.

I take this table of the ten kingdoms from Dr. Adam Clarke, who compiled it, as he states, from Michiavel and Bishop Lloyd.

These ten kingdoms are not brought under the notice of the prophet previous to the formation of the empire of Charlemagne. It is important to inquire and understand, as to what period of the history of these kings the prophet is speaking of them. This reference to them is evidently the state in which they were first seen as the horns of the beast, or as the constituent parts of the empire of Charlemagne.

Horns are something very different from the heads of the beast. The former are mere instruments of power or force, whilst the latter imply intelligence, capacity, or knowledge. It is said of them, in this early stage of the empire, these horns have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast ; meaning nothing else than the absolute sway which the early emperors exercised over them. These horns were the great strength of the empire in its wars. It is further said of them, they had received no kingdom as yet ; which shows that their early connexion with the empire was one of political inferiority, much below what it was at a subsequent period. Now, instead of governing, they are governed ; but their after history places them in a state of independent sovereignty, when the prophet sees them wearing crowns.

Their improvement in government and political science led them gradually up, step by step, and it is said they receive *power as kings!* one hour with the beast. This seems to imply the *mid-way* state of these horns, after they had passed from the no-kingdom state, but had not reached that point when they wore their crowns. But in this mid-way state, *they received power as kings, one hour with the beast.*

This description brings us to a period of great improvement in the government of the empire, when the fierceness of its old despotic physiognomy began to relax into more liberal forms ; and when the inexorable will of the emperor gave way to the decrees and sanctions of diets and assemblies, convened for the purpose of deliberating upon the general welfare of the whole empire. It was under this new feature of the government that these horns received *power as kings, one hour with the beast.* It is a striking picture of the government of the empire at the commencement of the Reformation and for some time before, when those kingdoms, by their representatives, formed the diets and great assemblies of the nation, and enacted laws and established regulations, with the concurrence of the emperor. In this way they received,

or exercised power as kings, one hour with the beast; that is, concurrently with the head of the empire; the head, the seat of supreme authority, being put for the whole beast.

All these ten horns, or kings, as they are afterwards explained to mean, were of one mind in their religion. They were all under the one great predominating religion of Europe —Popery; and they also gave their power and strength to the beast, by uniting with the emperor in his efforts to extinguish the early light of the Reformation. *These*—that is, these horns—*shall make war with the Lamb.* He who runs may read the history of this war, as it was waged by Charles V. and all the powers of his empire against the Reformation. *And the Lamb shall overcome them.* A wonderful change takes place in the religious views of these kings; they become converted to the very religion they were warring against; they embrace the faith and the doctrines of the new religion. And that is not all. To show that their conversion is thorough and sincere, these very kings, who had made war against the Lamb, it is said, *shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate; and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire.* 16th verse.

The strong term of degradation used in the verse designates a church, in which the purity and spirituality of the gospel had become abandoned and prostituted to a corrupt and sensual intercourse with the world. We shall see a further description of this prostitute church, as the prophet terms it, in a future chapter.

Hating this corrupt religion, making it desolate; eating its flesh and burning it with fire; are all terms which figuratively express the earnestness and zeal with which Protestantism opposed and laid open the corruptions of the Church of Rome; and roused the indignation of the kingdoms of Europe against the dangers of a religion which "assumed the right "of disposing of crowns and of releasing nations from their "oath of allegiance to their sovereign."

We are not to understand the prophet as meaning that

every one of those kings renounced the old corrupt religion of Europe and embraced the doctrines of the Reformation. For we know that there are some of those kingdoms that to this present time adhere to Popery; but what he means is, that the religious change of the empire was to such an extent as to place Protestantism in a position of strength and elevation, from which she could spread the light and truth of the gospel, freely and without hinderance from imperial authority. This was enough ; all that the gospel wants is a *free course.*

It will be recollected that we left the thirteenth chapter and passed over to the seventeenth, to attend to the explanations which the angel there gives to the prophet of the ten horns, or ten kings. Having heard his account of these kings, as above stated, we will now return to the thirteenth chapter, the theatre upon which this wonderful beast first appeared, and hear the prophet's further account of it.

Fifth verse, he says : *And there was given unto him a mouth, speaking great things and blasphemies ; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.*

Sixth verse : *And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.*

These two verses, with the exception of the forty-two months' duration of the beast, had their fulfillment in the reign of Charles V. The blasphemies and speaking great things represented as proceeding from the mouth of the beast, could not have occurred previous to the Reformation, because there was nothing before that event calculated to arouse the imperial blasphemy against God and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. Until the error and corruption of the Church of Rome were attacked by Luther and his co-reformers, the beast was quiet ; he was not heard speaking great things and blasphemies against God and against his tabernacle, and against them that dwell in heaven.

Before I proceed to show the instances of blasphemy which I suppose are alluded to by the prophet, it will be proper to re-

mark, that this same period of time, and generally the same incidents, have been animadverted upon in the twelfth chapter, under the characteristics of the great red dragon. There they were exhibited under a *religious* aspect, springing from religious persecution ; but *now* the *beast* is represented as acting politically, of himself, not being moved or directed by the dragon ; adopting measures to rid his dominions of this dangerous innovation, as he deemed it to be.

The historian speaks of the commencement of the reign of Charles thus : " No secular prince had yet embraced the new " opinions ; no change in the established forms of worship " had been introduced, nor any encroachments made upon the " possessions or jurisdiction of the clergy, when Charles V. " arrived in Germany." This shows conclusively that the *horns* were all one mind with the beast at that time on the subject of religion. But there was some stir amongst the people. Luther had spoken out boldly against the corruptions of the church, and his voice had reached even to Rome.

Charles saw that an agitation had commenced which, if not soon suppressed, would give him trouble, and almost " the first act of his administration was the appointment of a " diet, to be held at *Worms*, in order to concert with the " princes of the empire proper measures for checking the pro- " gress of those *new* and *dangerous* opinions, which threatened " to disturb the peace of Germany, and to overturn the re- " ligion of their ancestors."*

This step commenced that series of councils, diets, and assemblies, which were appointed from time to time by the emperor, and in which he exercised great authority, speaking great things and blasphemies. He impiously assumed to dictate what men should believe on the subject of religion, and actually published, as a standard of faith for the empire, a crude and corrupt system of religious doctrines called the " *Interim*," and required his subjects to embrace that at the

* Russell.

peril of his displeasure. Was not this blaspheming God, his name and his tabernacle, which implies his revealed word? Still further, he blasphemes them that dwell in heaven, by the measures which he took to drive Protestants out of their religion, denouncing it as dangerous to the peace and safety of the country, and compelling them by threats and persecu tions to return to the faith of the Romish Church.

Charles, as I have before said, could not be prevailed upon by the enemies of Luther to violate the safe conduct by which he had guaranteed the safety of Luther when he was called to attend the Diet of Worms. But a few days after the diet was dissolved and Luther had left the city, a severe edict was issued, in the emperor's name, and by authority of the diet, forbidding any person to harbor him, and requiring "all to concur in seizing his person as soon as his safe con- "duct was expired."

It was not to punish Luther that these harsh measures were taken, so much as it was to arrest the progress of the Reformation. Measures of still greater hostility towards the new religion subsequently compelled Protestants to unite themselves under the "Protestant League" for the defence of their *civil* rights, with the loss of which they were threatened as well as their religious rights.

All this persecution by the beast comes within the meaning of the prophet when he speaks of blaspheming them that dwell in heaven. This term of distinction was very appropriate to the reformers, as they were employed in setting up a religion that acknowledged God as its Author, and to whom alone man is accountable for his acts, in opposition to a religion that looked no higher than to man for its authority, and the responsibilities of men. The worship and aims of the one were thus in heaven, while the other looked no higher than earth.

Respecting this blasphemy, it may give us more distinct conceptions of it to say, that there were three subjects or objects that it referred to. 1. To God himself. The emperor

undertook to decide what his subjects should believe in matters of religion, and for this purpose he published the "*In-*"*terim.*" This was clearly assuming an authority which belongs to God alone.

2. It referred to his *name* and his *tabernacle.* The name of God implies his authority, and consequently his government. The Psalmist says: *O Lord, our Lord, how excellent is thy name* [thy government] *in all the earth!* This moral government of the Creator over his creatures was blasphemously interfered with by imperial edicts, which forbade the worship of God as the Protestants worshiped him, and against his tabernacle.

This was the suppression of the word of God, which was not allowed to circulate in the empire. Even the writings of Luther were gathered and burned when the Papists could get hold of them. The *tabernacle* figuratively expresses God's Word, from its connection with the law of the Lord among the Jews, which was deposited in the tabernacle, whence it was promulgated to the people.

And thirdly, the blasphemy referred to them that dwell in heaven. Enough has already been said to show the meaning of this third branch of the blasphemy.

The seventh verse continues the description of the beast in the exercise of his civil power, but does not apply to the reign of Charles V. It has reference to events that occurred further in the history of the beast. It does not apply to Charles, because we have seen that the Protestants rather overcame him, when Prince Maurice pursued him and was near capturing him at Inspruck, and finally compelled him to the treaty of Passau, the first public recognition, by treaty stipulations of the civil and religious rights of the Protestants of the German Empire.

The text has application chiefly to the times of the Ferdinands, the Second and the Third. They harassed the Protestants by the most vexatious impositions, and even demanded the

surrender of those rights which had been guaranteed to them by the treaty with Charles V.

The Protestants resisted and rebelled openly against the tyranny of Ferdinand II.; the consequence was, as we have seen, a long and obstinate war, in which they suffered greatly and at length were *overcome*, after being thrown into consternation by the irreparable disasters which befell their arms, and induced them to submit to the treaty of Prague.

To this same period the latter clause of the seventh verse, and also the eighth verse refers: *And power was given him* (the beast) *over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.* Eighth verse: *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*

The power of the German emperors generally, but particularly at the time now under consideration, was irresistible; their arms bore down all opposition, and it may be said, as the last clause of the seventh verse intimates, they were the masters of Europe.

This vast monarchy was regarded by the rest of Europe generally with feelings of dread and veneration. Civil pre-eminence and military grandeur were its prominent features, in the eyes of all Catholic people and nations especially, as it was the great right arm of Popery. These devotees of the empire are represented in the fourth verse as *worshiping the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?*

The Pope crowned the emperor; a fact which of itself stamped the empire in the eyes of all Catholic nations with a sacredness which commanded their veneration.

I know that France, and even Rome, was sometimes in collision with the empire, and that a temporary relaxation of the religious feeling which bound them together appeared for a while to separate them; but they never lost entirely their veneration for the empire. That inextinguishable sentiment—that what the Pope has crowned and consecrated—

must be holy! never left them. It maintained in their feelings a perpetual awe and religious veneration of the "Holy "Roman Empire."

The prophet tells us, in the eighth verse, who they are that worship the beast. They are those *whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.* That is, those who are Christ's are represented as having their names recorded in His book of life. But those who worshiped the *beast* and the *dragon are not* written in this work; their names do not appear upon its pages.

A line of distinction is clearly drawn in this eighth verse between the Romish and the Protestant religion—the objects of popish worship and the spirit of the religion introduced by the Reformation. The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world is the foundation and corner-stone of the faith and hope of Protestants; but, as the prophet represents in this eighth verse, the popish religion looked to nothing higher than human power and authority—it worshiped the dragon and the beast.

St. Peter, pre-eminent amongst all the apostles in the esteem of Rome, was himself apt to slide into this worldly and man-worshiping spirit in the early days of his discipleship. It was on an occasion of that kind, when he presumptuously put human power and authority above the purposes and power of God, that he received from Christ that scorching rebuke—*Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.* This should have served as a warning to all churches in all after ages, to guard most scrupulously against setting up the authority of man, where the authority of God only should be seen and acknowledged.

Happy would it have been for Christianity and for the world, if the bright and holier character of St. Peter's after-life had been as zealously imitated by his boasted successors as this dark spot in his early life has been.

Ninth verse : *If any man have an ear let him hear.* This was a frequent saying of our Lord when he would call the serious attention of his hearers to some important truth he was about to announce. The prophet uses it for the same purpose.

Tenth verse : *He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity : he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword.* This is the important declaration to which he called attention in the above words. This is a prophecy of what was to happen to the beast after the period at which he was then speaking.

The prediction is, that this great empire, which now upholds the papal power of Europe, after having subdued nations by its sword, and brought them into a religious captivity to the Church of Rome, shall itself be brought into captivity by the Protestant religion, and shall be killed by the sword. The empire will be broken up ; a military power, stronger than itself, will assail it, and subdue it. This was done by the power of Napoleon, who broke up and scattered the old German Empire, and employed its materials in constructing his own vast empire.

The prophet continues, and foretells what will be the condition of the saints when these predicted events take place. *Here is the patience and the faith of the saints*, he triumphantly exclaims. Here is the end of their captivity and oppression by the power of the beast. For ages they struggled and contended with this colossal power ; they kept their patience and maintained their faith to the end ; and now, when those who oppressed and persecuted them are cast down, they are exalted to honor.

In plain language, the German Empire, which inflicted wrongs and injuries upon its Protestant subjects in order to destroy their religion, is now broken and scattered, whilst Protestantism has risen to eminence, influence, and power, upon its very ruins.

All this has become history. We may now read in the

events of the first half of the nineteenth century all that the prophet has said in this tenth verse of the thirteenth chapter of the Revelation.

He says in the fifth verse that the beast should continue forty and two months. These are the 1260 days which have so many and such important events connected with their termination.

I do not presume to say in what year they terminated, if indeed they have terminated ; but, speaking in a mere conjectural way, I should say that the probability is in favor of their having run out within the half century just passed. At least, the most extraordinary changes, such as no one would have imagined one hundred years ago, have within the last fifty years passed upon the civil and religious condition of the world, by which both have been greatly improved and pacified. Old religious systems, full of error and vice, and civil governments founded in despotism and cruelty, have been exploded and thrown aside as not befitting rational and intelligent beings. The light and teachings of the religion of Christ have superseded the dogmas of ignorance and superstition. And what the next half century may produce in the way of human improvement in religion and government, in arts and science, is as far beyond the present power of the human mind to conceive, as the results of the last half century have surpassed any expectation that men entertained at its beginning.

But these reflections will be more in place in the next chapter. I am anxious, as I have no doubt the reader is, too, to reach the happy scenes of the fourteenth chapter ; but the prophet has another beast to show us before he can gratify our wishes. Let us look at this *two-horned lamb-and-dragon* beast—an odd compound, truly ; but the prophet has made no mistake about its character.

THE BEAST WITH TWO HORNS !

Eleventh verse : *And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.*

If the Romish Church had kept up a succession of popes such as Gregory I. was, and such bishops as Claude of Turin, this two-horned beast never would have appeared.

We shall look in vain to find men in whose lives the Christian virtues shone with a purer or stronger light than in these. They illustrated, in a remarkable manner, the doctrines, the faith, and the holy living inculcated by the gospel. Their charity shone conspicuous, not in ostentatious display, but in good works of kindness, faith, and humility.

But the popes soon began to taste the ensnaring sweets of temporal power. They could not resist the temptation to join in the scramble for the spoils that fell out of the overthrow of the old Roman Empire ; and, having possessed themselves of a large share of them, they appeared before the world in the anomalous character in which the prophet describes them.

After this new form of temporal power had been assumed by the popes, we no longer see amongst them such men as the first Gregory and the pious Claude ; but if, in the lapse of ages, there have appeared amongst them a few instances of men who seemed to regard the true interests of religion more than the glory and dominion of this world, they resemble those solitary stalks of genuine wheat which are sometimes seen springing up, as if to show what was once the produce of the field, now overgrown with thorns and briers, and all manner of noxious weeds.

In contemplating this beast we must separate it from a strictly ecclesiastical character, or at least we must regard it as clothed with a political power, which goes beyond and exerts an all-controlling influence over its religious character

It is from its decided political nature that it derives the name of beast—a term of designation which the prophet never applies to a power that is decidedly ecclesiastic—a church is never represented by a beast when it is simply a church.

The popedom, in its temporal power, had taken its stand amongst the kingdoms of this world, and claimed a power and exercised an authority above them all.

This beast is seen coming up out of the *earth.* From the description, its appearance was not sudden or abrupt, but gradual ; and coming out of the *earth* signifies that it arose from secular or worldly ambition, and that it coveted the exercise of temporal authority and dominion. Its future history will show how steadily it adhered to that aim.

The first step towards the temporal power of the popedom, or the rise of this second beast, is to be found in the measures of Gregory II., A.D. 728, and was consummated by Gregory VII., A.D. 1078, when superiority over all earthly powers and dominions was affirmed by him to belong to the popes. "Gregory's "project of making himself lord of Christendom appeared, "not only by dissolving the jurisdiction which kings and em- "perors had hitherto exercised over the various orders of the "clergy, but also by subjecting to the papal authority all "*temporal princes,* and rendering their dominions tributary to "the See of Rome."* Such instances of the exercise of temporal power are very frequent in the history of the popes after as well as during the pontificate of Gregory VII.

As this beast is a politico-religious power, its horns must resemble it ; they must present in their constitution or habits a similar mixture of religious and political power. They are instruments or powers supporting the beast by ministering to its ambitious purposes.

The prophet simply says of these horns that they were like a lamb—that is, they were, in their profession, mild, harmless, and innocent ; and he says nothing further about them.

* Russell.

A slight reference to their position and offices will show how efficient the powers of these horns were, and how indispensable they were to the beast.

These two horns, no doubt, signify the College of Cardinals as one, and the monastic body as the other. These are separate and distinct institutions, but in their different sphere of action they produce an influence which upholds the beast, and sustains his authority even when he speaks like a dragon.

Besides having the election of the Popes in their hands, the cardinals were generally the *prime ministers* at all the courts of Europe before the Reformation, and very commonly at the Catholic courts since ; and, in most instances, they ruled the king quite as effectually as they ruled his state affairs. So that this horn was in a position to bend everything, and to mold every measure to suit the interests of the popedom. Amongst these cardinals were found the most astute politicians of the age. They also displayed the greatest military skill in conducting armies, as well as the coolest bravery in time of battle. They were equally adroit in handling the sword and in managing the affairs of state. Cardinal Richelieu was not a solitary instance of this remarkable combination of civil, military, and ecclesiastical genius.

The College of Cardinals, who became the electors of the Pope by the judicious arrangement of Pope Alexander III., were brought under the most stringent measures, to compel a speedy election, by Gregory X. Before the college of electors was decreed, the election of Pope was often attended with much confusion at Rome. The people who participated in it became turbulent and riotous—an evil that was effectually cured by placing the election in the College of Cardinals. But still another evil remained. It was found that unless measures were adopted to expedite the election, the cardinals might defer it at their pleasure, and thus keep the world without a Pope, and the church without a head, as long as their private predilections for different candidates might con-

tinue. Instances had frequently occurred of a very protracted election on this account. But this evil was finally corrected by means somewhat similar to those that are employed to force juries to agree upon a verdict.

The "Conclave" was established by Gregory X. By his bull, nine days were allowed for the obsequies of a deceased Pope. On the tenth day the College of Cardinals were required to be present and enter upon their duties. They were placed in a spacious apartment, where they were shut up. Their tables were sumptuously supplied for three days. If the election was not made then, the pleasures of the table were greatly diminished, and if it was prolonged beyond eight days, they were reduced to bread, wine, and water. This sensible appeal made by Gregory to the appetite of the cardinals had the effect to hasten the election, and, at the same time, to prevent any serious bickerings amongst them, growing out of their partialities for different candidates, and a protracted election.

This body of cardinals, holding in its hands the exclusive power of appointing the Pope, and at the same time, from the high rank which most of them held in the governments of Europe, having it in their power to direct the movements of whole kingdoms, it must be admitted was a most important horn of this beast.

The other horn was the monastic institution. There were various orders and names peculiar to the monks, but they were all comprehended in one institution.

This horn, like the first, wore the outward semblance of meekness. The monks were very humble and self-sacrificing in their religion. Destitution and poverty, even to beggary, gave them an exalted reputation for piety.

These different orders were all under the authority of the Pope, and they held his temporal power above the kings of the earth. The peculiar features of this institution are merely glanced at by the following brief notices taken from *Watson's Dictionary*. I shall not look farther back than to

the close of the seventh century, when this beast began to come up out of the earth.

"The monastic orders," says Mr. Watson, "were at first "under the immediate jurisdiction of the bishops, from which "they were exempted by the *Roman Pontiff*, about the end "of the seventh century; and the monks in return *devoted* "*themselves wholly to advance the interests and to maintain the* "*dignity of the bishop of Rome.* * * Nothing could equal "the veneration that was paid about the close of the ninth "century, to such as devoted themselves to the sacred gloom "and indolence of a convent. This veneration caused several "kings and emperors to call them to their courts, and to "employ them in civil affairs of the greatest moment.

"In the eleventh century, *they were exempted by the Popes* "*from the authority of their sovereigns*, and new orders of "monks were continually established, insomuch that in the "Council of Lateran, that was held A.D. 1215, a decree "was passed by the advice of Innocent III., to prevent any "new monastic institution," &c.

The points aimed to be established by the above extracts are, first, that the monastic institution was under the exclusive authority of the Pope, and wholly subservient to his interests; and, secondly, that they were frequently called to positions of political eminence, where their services might be most useful to the Pope.

We see from these extracts that the monks were, in the first instance, exempted from the jurisdiction of the bishops, and in the second instance they were exempted by the Popes from the authority of their sovereigns. There was now nothing left for them to do but to serve the Pope; and thus they became a most efficient horn in maintaining his temporal power. They were vastly more numerous than the cardinals; they crowded the cities and swarmed over the countries of Europe; they were at every door and in almost every house, begging alms or selling sacred relics and indulgences, the common merchandize sold by the church, to the ignorant

and superstitious. But everywhere, and in every condition, whether in the city, the convent, or in the country, the Pope was the object of their highest veneration ; and they failed not in their important duties, as one of the horns of the beast, to uphold and magnify his power.

Supported by two such powerful auxiliaries as these horns were, the beast would be very apt to express his sense of superiority in tones of authority and defiance, just as the prophet says he did : *and he spake as a dragon!* The beast, by his speech, betrayed the spirit of the dragon.

In order to form a true idea of the prophet's meaning, we must look at the history of the dragon; his acts and his speech signify the same thing. This is the same dragon that gave to the first beast his seat and great authority, and that imbued with his own spirit the beast with seven heads and ten horns, as we have seen in the thirteenth chapter, and that stood before the woman who brought forth the man-child, to destroy her child ; and that cast out of his mouth a flood to carry away the woman ; and went to make war upon the remnant of her seed. This is the same spirit of religious despotism and ecclesiastical arrogance which for ages trod down the religious liberty of Europe, and kept the people shut up in the slavery and ignorance of superstition. These are the acts of the veritable dragon ; and the prophet says : *this beast spake like*, or *as the dragon.* The *bulls* and *anathemas* of the Popes, in the plenitude of their temporal power, correspond in spirit with those acts of the dragon—that is what the prophet means.

This is the same dragon that in the person of Leo III., when contented with the exercise of his ecclesiastical powers alone, gave his seat and great authority to the first beast ; and afterwards, in the person of Gregory VII., not only resumed his former gifts—took back all that had been conferred by Leo III.—but laid claim to dominion and authority over the whole earth ! In this position the dragon sinks his ecclesiastical title, and takes rank with the great beast which

appeared before him; for the reason that the popedom now becomes more conspicuous as a *temporal* than a *spiritual* power; hence the prophet applies to it the term *beast!* Let us hear some of the speeches of this two-horned beast, and we shall agree with the prophet that he speaks as a dragon!

This peculiar manner of speaking refers, in my judgment, to the extravagant and pompous claims set up by the Popes to universal dominion, and the dictatorial and despotic manner in which they exercised authority over kings and emperors; and also it refers to the cruel persecution with which they pursued the earliest reformers.

This fabulous beast of antiquity was the standing symbol in Jewish prophecy of ferocious despotism and unrelenting persecution; and when the prophet says this two-horned beast spake as a dragon, he means that he shows the spirit and principles of the old Jewish dragon, the constant representative of the civil and religious despotism of pagan Rome and other pagan and idolatrous nations, from whose power the Jews suffered so frequently and severely.

The first assumption of temporal dominion by the Popes was in the claim of Gregory VII., in 1073. I shall quote from Russell's History:

"Gregory began his pontificate with excommunicating every "ecclesiastic who should receive a benefice from a layman, "and every layman by whom such benefice should be con-"ferred. *This was engaging the church in an open war with* "*the sovereigns of all nations.* But the thunder of the Holy "See was more particularly directed against the Emperor of "Germany, (Henry IV.); and Henry, sensible of his dan-"ger, and willing to avert it, wrote a submissive letter to "Gregory.

"In order to effect his object of making himself lord of "Christendom, Gregory not only dissolved the jurisdiction "which kings and emperors had hitherto exercised over the "various order of the clergy, but he also *subjected to the papal*

" *authority all temporal princes, and rendered their dominions* " *tributary to the see of Rome.* Solomon, King of Hungary, " dethroned by his brother Geysa, had fled to Henry for pro- " tection, and renewed the homage of Hungary to the em- " pire. Gregory, who favored Geysa, exclaimed against this " act of submission, and said, in a letter to Solomon, 'You " 'ought to know that the kingdom of Hungary belongs to " 'the *Roman Church* ; and learn that you will incur the in- " 'dignation of the Holy See if you do not acknowledge that " 'you hold your dominions of the *Pope* and not of the em- " 'peror.' "

The quarrel between Henry and the Pope resulted in a bull, depriving the emperor of his authority, and releasing his subjects from their oath of allegiance to him. The language of the bull was this : " I prohibit Henry, the son of our Em- " peror Henry, from governing the Teutonic Kingdom and " Italy. I release all Christians from their oath of allegiance " to him, and I strictly forbid all persons from serving or at- " tending him as king."

" This is the first instance," says Russell, " of a Pope's pre- " tending to deprive a sovereign of his crown ; but it was too " flattering to ecclesiastic pride to be the last."

Still more imperious and despotic were the decrees and the acts of Pope Innocent III., who came to the pontificate in 1198. He gave the law to the nations in the following brief declaration : " Neither princes nor bishops, civil gover- " nors nor ecclesiastical rulers, have any lawful power, *in* " *Church or State, but what they derive from the Pope.*"

England was made to feel, in a striking manner, the effect of this doctrine.

Her king (John) undertook to check the extravagant claims of Innocent to rule in England as he did in Rome. Innocent immediately laid the kingdom under an interdict. " The nation was suddenly deprived of all exterior exercise of " its religion ; the altars were despoiled of their ornaments ; " the crosses, the relics, the images, the statues of the saints,

" were laid on the ground. The use of bells entirely ceased " in all the churches. The dead were not interred in conse- " crated ground; they were thrown into ditches, or buried in " the common fields. The people were prohibited the use of " meat, as in Lent, and debarred from all pleasures and " amusements. Everything wore the appearance of the deep- " est distress, and of the most immediate apprehensions of " divine vengeance and indignation.

" While England groaned under this dreadful sentence, a " new and very extraordinary scene disclosed itself on the " continent. Pope Innocent III. published a crusade against " the Albigenses, a species of sectaries in the south of France " whom he denominated heretics, because, like all sectaries, " they neglected the rites of the church, and opposed the " power and influence of the clergy. Moved by that mad su- " perstition which had hurried such armies into Asia in order " to combat the infidels, and the reigning passion for wars " and adventures, people flocked from all parts of Europe to " the standard of Simon de Montfort, the general of this cru- " sade. The Count of Tholouse, who protected the Albi- " genses, was stripped of his dominions, and those unhappy " people themselves, though the most inoffensive of mankind, " were exterminated with all the circumstances of the most " unfeeling barbarity."*

The sufferings of these Albigenses have been under the notice of the reader before. They were the principal forerunners of the Reformation.

These extracts from the proceedings of the Popes named, may be regarded as an illustration of the manner in which the beast spoke generally, from the days of Gregory VII. down to the times of the Reformation; when a better understanding of Christianity checked his arrogance and restrained his power of persecution. And these examples show conclusively that the beast spoke as a dragon!

* Russell.

Other traits of this two-horned beast are given by the prophet, to assure us of his identity. It is said in the 12th verse, that *he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him.* We have seen that he claimed all earthly power as well as spiritual, and placed himself above kings and princes; but the prophet says, *he exercised it.* He made good his claim by putting into practice the power he assumed.

The emperors of the German empire were powerful in arms; they subdued their enemies and conquered kingdoms by the sword; and all this the Pope did by his *bulls* and *interdicts*—the effect of which upon England has just been recited. In that instance the Pope denounced sentence of deposition against the king, and gave his kingdom to France. King John found it useless to contend against the fearful effects of the interdict. The superstition and dread of the people led him to submit to the Pope and agree to hold his kingdom as a fief of the Church of Rome! France was laid under a similar interdict, and her monarch too was compelled to submit to the authority of the Holy See!

Henry IV., of Germany, was summoned by Gregory VII. to appear before him to answer for an alleged contumacy. The emperor at first, under the impulse of his imperial dignity, treated the summons with disdain; but the Pope promptly deposed and excommunicated him. Dreading the effect of this sentence upon his subjects, Henry presented himself submissively at the gates of Carosa, where the Pope was sojourning at the time. Being admitted to the outer court, he was stripped of his robes and wrapped in sack-cloth. He was obliged to remain three days barefooted and fasting; he was then permitted to throw himself at the feet of the Pontiff, who condescended to grant him absolution, after he had sworn obedience to the Pope in all things.

These are a few of the many instances in which he exercised all the power of the first beast before him.

It is further said: *he caused the earth and them that dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.*

We have seen the beast, that received the deadly wound in one of his heads, which was healed, and the prophet makes himself perfectly understood in his allusion to the first beast, by referring to that circumstance. But how did he cause the earth and them which dwell in it to worship the beast? Simply by the act of *crowning the emperors!* Charlemagne was crowned by Leo III., and the practice was continued in his successors. When the emperor was elected he proceeded in military pomp to Rome, and received his crown from the Pope! The word *worship*, in this case, is not used in a religious sense; it is to be understood in a political or civil sense. This act of crowning the emperor carried the Pope's authority to all the earth, to acknowledge and pay homage to the emperor.

Thirteenth verse: *And he doeth great wonders.* A general term, signifying that the beast, by his power, did, amongst the nations and kingdoms, things that were wonderful. Most wonderful, indeed, it was, that one man, by his religious position in the world, should exercise such great authority over kings and emperors, and that crowns and thrones should be disposed of at his bidding! and that the allegiance of subjects to their sovereigns should be dissolved by his command! This is all wonderful; at least it is so to the present enlightened age.

But his wonderful acts go even to the extent of *making fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men!* This is something even beyond the nature of his general acts of a wonderful kind. The figurative use of *fire* clearly implies that the prophet alludes to something peculiarly destructive and ruinous—something remarkable for its wild and uncontrollable devastation! like those fires which lay waste whole cities, and consume and destroy vast amounts of property. Where shall we find an illustration of this figure but in the *Crusades* against the Infidels! got up and prosecuted for the purpose of wresting the holy sepulchre out of the hands of the Turks. Fire is a fit emblem of the tumultuous scenes

of battle, slaughter and devastation, which consumed both Asia and Europe, during these crusades.

All Christendom rushed into this chaos of madness and fanaticism, and Europe rolled her innumerable hosts upon Asia, treading down nations in their course. The earth over which they passed was marked with blood and strewed with the dead; disease and famine, like a raging fire, consumed the countless multitudes that were led out upon that insane enterprise, and the whole country, from Constantinople to Jerusalem, looked as if the fires of Sodom had swept over it.

Now all this was done at the instigation of the two-horned beast! His authority made this fire come down from heaven on the earth. Heaven is used to distinguish Christendom from all the rest of the earth, where Christianity was not known; and these crusades came out of Christendom—this fire came down from this heaven upon the earth; a country outside of Christendom. It fell upon the earth *in the sight of men*, before the heathen world, who looked upon this prodigal waste of human life, perpetrated in the name of Christianity, with the profoundest astonishment. In the sight of men, implies the surprise and wonder with which all the world besides contemplated the madness and infatuation of the crusades.

No merely secular potentate, not even Charlemagne, could have bound the nations of Europe together, and carried them through such scenes of suffering and slaughter as those which characterized the crusades. Nothing but the power of the Pope could do this!—nothing but his authority could make whole nations break up their established order and domestic quiet, to go in pursuit of a fancied foe, whom they had never seen nor ever heard of, but by the enthusiastic harangues of monks, whose superstitious zeal and piety had become inflamed at the idea of the holy sepulchre being in the hands of infidels. Thus this two-horned beast *made fire come down from heaven on the earth, in the sight of men.*

Thus far the prophet has been exhibiting the political

characteristics of the beast, showing us the great extent of his dominion, and the power he exercised over the kings of the earth. Now he proceeds to a description of his religious peculiarities, for we must not forget that this beast is singularly compounded of two distinct properties. He was at once the lamb, signifying his meek or religious character, and at the same time the dragon, representing his political or temporal power, employed in acts of persecution. We are now called to notice the prominent feature of his religious system.

Fourteenth verse: *And* [he] *deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast, &c.*

The whole religious practice of the beast was delusion, if we believe what the prophet says respecting it. He says the beast practiced deception upon the people by the means of miracles—pretended miracles, of course. If they had been genuine miracles they could not have deceived anybody, but, as they were the means of deceiving the people, of course they were mere *cheats.* Where is the church that has boasted of her miracles—that has pointed to "*those miracles,*" as the prophet emphatically calls them, as justifying her claim to the character of the only true church? It would be tedious as well as disgusting to enumerate a hundredth part of those miracles which have been the means of deceiving the people. *Images that shed tears* at the pathetic recital of the sufferings of some venerable saint, and others that gave out drops of blood on suitable occasions, besides the endless list of miracles performed by every sort of relic, of which the darkness and ignorance of the church were so prolific at that time. The church which makes those pretensions to miracles the prophet pronounces to be a deceiver; and St. Paul gives it the same character. Speaking in 2 Thess. of the coming of an ecclesiastical establishment, he says: *Whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders.* These two venerable apostles, both speaking

under prophetic inspiration, concur in warning the world against the miracle-boasting church that would arise in after ages. And St. Peter is out of all patience with the same deceiver. He speaks of it, in his Second Epistle, in this wise: *And through covetousness shall they, with feigned words*, [alias, *false pretences*—alias, *deceiving miracles*,] *make merchandise of you.* By these false pretences, Peter speaks in the severest terms of the people he is alluding to. He says: *Their judgment, now of a long time, lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.* Beyond all doubt, this is *a church* St. Peter is speaking of; for he compares the false teachers of this Christian body to the false prophets of the Jewish Church.

Peter might well be excused for the severe terms he employs in speaking of the *false teachers and the feigned words*, which he foresaw, by the spirit of prophecy, would distinguish the church in a future day, if he also saw, by the same prophetic vision, the scandal that would be brought upon his own name, by being adopted as the patron apostle of that church.

But let us return to the prophet. He says those miracles were done in the *sight of the beast.* Before all Germany, and the emperors, and the princes and people, all united in extolling and applauding the wonderful power possessed by the two-horned beast. This was before the Reformation. These miracles were looked upon in a different light afterwards.

But as these cheats were nothing more than the inventions of men, they would wear out, and in time become of no avail. The common sense of the people, under better light and information, would reject these shallow pretensions, as they did when the Reformation exposed the errors of the Romish Church. Something else, therefore, had to be devised to take the place of these means of deceiving, and to sustain the bold pretensions of the church when her miracle-charm should be broken.

We must give the two-horned beast great credit for the dexterity with which it provided proper substitutes to take

the place of the worn-out expedients. When he foresaw that one scheme must fail, he promptly devised another to put in its place. Purgatory and transubstantiation were both brought into his service after the effect of his miracles began to fail. These may be called spiritual horns, for they have exerted a powerful influence in upholding the authority and influence of the papacy. But the great substitute of all was the *image!*

In the fourteenth verse, after speaking of the use of miracles as a means of deceiving the people, the prophet adds the next expedient which was adopted by the beast, who is represented as commanding that an *image* should be made to the *beast* which had the *wound* by a sword and did live.

This point in the prophet's description is worthy of the closest attention, and from its importance it will have a more particular and protracted notice than has been given to the miracles.

From the history which I consider as the true account of this image, I date its origin about the middle of the *sixteenth century.*

This was the period when Luther had made a prodigious impression upon Europe, and particularly upon the German empire by his writings and preaching. In a word, the Reformation then had faced the powers of Popery, and boldly denounced its errors and its corruptions. The effect of the Reformation, even at that early day of its existence was, that it took nearly the half of Germany, besides England and Scotland out of the hands of the Pope. Such a moral revolution as this was could not help shaking the throne of the two-horned beast ; the Vatican was thrown into consternation, and the Holy See trembled for the safety of its dominions, when Germany, the great beast, with seven heads and ten horns, fell off from its faith and fidelity to Rome to such an alarming extent. It was in this hour of alarm and perturbation that the two-horned beast felt the necessity of providing some other power, or support, to take the place of the

first beast, or German empire, which he now had sufficient reason for fearing would abandon his cause altogether. Besides this failure of so great a civil and military power, the miracles too had lost their effect of deceiving the people.

In this dilemma the two-horned beast is represented as calling upon them that dwell upon the earth, and saying that *they should make an image to the beast which had the wound by a sword and did live.* As if he had said : I foresee that I am about to lose that submission and support I have hitherto had from the German emperors; therefore, let another power, a substitute, be provided, with such an organization, and with such *secular* and *spiritual* attributes as will enable it to continue the support which my dominion has hitherto received from the first beast. *Make an image to the beast!*—a power that will resemble it—not in its political form, or position, amongst the kingdoms, but which shall exert a moral power and influence over men, that will resemble, or be an image of the great political power which the German empire exerted over all Europe.

This image can be nothing else than the Society of Jesuits! The history of this society abounds with moral features which give it a striking resemblance to the political character of the German empire. To show this similitude, and the adaptation of the image to perform the peculiar functions of its destiny, I shall submit a few extracts from its history. In doing this, I am not called upon to notice the dark side of the character of that society, as it is represented by writers on church history, and others; I shall content myself with simply stating those facts which entitle it to be considered the image of the beast which *had the wound by a sword and did live.* But, before I submit those extracts, it will be proper to state exactly what the prophet says in relation to the agency the beast had in giving life and speech to the image, and in securing to it universal homage : all this is condensed in the short compass of the fifteenth verse : *And he had power to give life unto the image of the*

beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

This evidently shows that all the power and influence which the image exerted over the people of different ranks and condition in the world, were conferred by the authority of the Pope. He adopted the society in its infancy, took it under his favor, and gave it his high sanction, by conferring upon it special and rare privileges and powers. He also thundered his anathemas against all who would not worship, or acknowledge the authority, and submit to the measures which were devised and adopted by the image, to strengthen and enlarge the power and dominion of the two-horned beast ; this was the sole object for which the image was made, and for which the beast gave it power to *speak!* which means, not to utter words, but to exercise all authority, and to adopt all measures necessary to the purpose of its existence. He, the beast, punishing all who resisted the image by obstructing its operations.

From Watson's Biblical and Theological Dictionary I take the following remarks :

" Jesuits, one of the most celebrated monastic orders of the " Romish Church, was founded, in the year 1540, by Igna-" tius Loyola. Forsaking the military for the ecclesiastical " profession, he engaged himself in the wildest and most ex-" travagant adventures as the Knight of the Blessed Virgin.

" After performing a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and " pursuing a multitude of visionary schemes, he returned to " prosecute his theological studies in the universities of Spain. " He next went to Paris, where he collected a small number " of associates ; and, prompted by his fanatical spirit or the " love of distinction, began to conceive the establishment of " a new religious order. He produced a plan of its constitu-" tion and laws, which he affirmed to have been suggested by " the immediate *inspiration of heaven*, and applied to the Ro-

" man Pontiff, Paul III., for the *sanction of his authority* to " confirm the institution."

This was equivalent to *crowning* the emperor, and is the first point of resemblance between the *image* and the beast, or German Empire !

" At a time when the papal authority had received so se- " vere a shock from the progress of the Reformation, and was " still exposed to the most powerful attacks in every quarter, " this was an offer too tempting to be resisted. The reign- " ing pontiff, clearly perceiving the benefit of multiplying " power which would uphold his cause, instantly confirmed " by his bull the institution of the Jesuits, granting the most " ample privileges to the members of the society, and ap- " pointed Loyola the first general of the order.

" The immediate design of every other religious society was " to separate its members *from* the world, that of the Jesuits " to render them *masters of the world.* [Another point of re- " semblance to the beast.] The follower of Loyola considered " himself as plunging into the battle of secular affairs to " maintain the interests of the Romish Church.

" That the members of the new order might have full " leisure for this active service, they were exempted from the " usual functions of other monks. They attended no proces- " sions, and practiced no austerities. They were sent forth " to watch every transaction of the world which might ap- " pear to affect the interests of religion, and were especially " enjoined to study the dispositions and cultivate the friend- " ship of persons in the higher ranks. Nothing could be " imagined more open and liberal than the external aspect of " the institution, yet nothing could be more strict and secret " than its internal organization.

" Loyola, influenced perhaps by the notions of implicit " obedience which he had derived from his military profes- " sion, resolved that the government of the Jesuits should be " *absolutely monarchical.* A general, chosen for life by depu-

" ties from the several provinces, possessed supreme and in-
" dependent power, extending to every person, and applying
" to every case. Every member of the order the instant that
" he entered its pale, surrendered all freedom of thought and
" action, and every personal feeling was superseded by the
" interests of that body to which he had attached him-
" self," &c.

In these extracts from Mr. Watson may be seen several strong points of resemblance to the first beast, as well as those internal principles and arrangements which fully qualified the image to perform his appointed service.

Russell, in what he says respecting the Jesuits, varies very little from Mr. Watson.

" The head of the Church of Rome," he observes " not
" willing to rest what remained of his spiritual empire merely
" on the virtues and talents of its secular members, instituted
" a new monastic order—namely, that of the Jesuits, who,
" instead of being confined to the silence and solitude of the
" cloister, like other monks, were taught to consider them-
" selves as formed for action—as chosen soldiers, who, under
" the command of a general, were bound to exert themselves
" continually in the service of Christ and of the Pope, his
" vicar on earth. To give more vigor and concert to their
" efforts in opposing the enemies of the Holy See, and in ex-
" tending its dominion, the general, or head of the order,
" was invested with the most despotic authority over its mem-
" bers. They were required to attend to the transactions of
" the great world, to study the dispositions and cultivate the
" friendship of persons in power."

The foregoing extracts give a general idea of the institution and purposes of the image. We also see that it had its origin in France. It sprung from the bosom of a nation which has produced more convulsions of empires and revolutions of kingdoms than any other in Europe. In that nation, whose greatest ambition was war and military glory, this image had its birth. The prophet implies as much when he represents

the two-horned beast *saying to them that dwell on the earth*—having nothing heavenly in their institutions!

The sixteenth and seventeenth verses express, in the prophet's usual stern brevity, the work which the image is to do for the beast. The Rev. Mr. Croly translates the sixteenth verse: "And *it* [namely, the image] causeth all, both small "and great, rich and poor," &c., &c. Mr. Croly is abundantly able to make good any position that he takes in biblical criticism. But whether the prophet intends to say that *it* (the image) did these things stated in the two verses, or that the beast caused them to be done by the image, is of no consequence in the end. Yet I concur with Mr. Croly in his view of the proper translation of the verse. The two verses read: *And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their forehead. And that no man might buy or sell save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.*

The time when this image appeared was evident, by the period when the Reformation had produced some very decided effects in separating men from the dominion of the Romish Church. The fact of marking the forehead or hand, to distinguish those who belong to the beast, from those who do not, shows that an important change had been produced in the religious views of men. We know, therefore, that the prophet is speaking of a time when Protestantism was successfully invading the territory of Popery. It is important to notice, that the image employed its powers in two separate modes. First, in *marking*, sometimes the forehead, and at other times the hand, in order to identify those so marked as subjects of the two-horned beast. The second mode of exerting his power was, in depriving men of the liberty of *buying* and *selling*, who were not marked in one or the other of the above modes. Marking the forehead, is a figurative expression, implying that the *learning* and *knowledge* of the more cultivated classes of men, were identified with the cause of the beast, while the mark in the hand was designed to

show that the laboring classes yielded up the gains of their labor for the support of the beast; paying exorbitant rates for priestly services, in relieving their friends from purgatory, or for granting to themselves absolution or indulgences. This is illustrated by the public sale of indulgences by order of the Pope, Leo X., besides the great variety of taxes levied upon the poor as well as the rich, to replenish the coffers of the church, or swell the wealth of the order.

The hand of labor was thus marked, subjecting its earnings to the order of the priest, to be by him applied where and how he may choose, without regard to the particular interest or desire of the man whose labor produced it. Thus the hard earnings of the toil and labor of the people in one country, are often seized upon to erect splendid cathedrals, and support the luxury and extravagance of an idle priesthood in another country! This is according to the system of the Romish Church, and they, no doubt, think it right. It is no business of mine to object to it, or quarrel with it; but I believe the prophet refers to it as one of the peculiarities of the church he is speaking of, and as an item of evidence to prove the identity of the image.

The means of getting hold of the earnings of the hand of labor are not always the same. In some instances the command of the priest opens the hand and appropriates its contents; in other instances, the bishop or priest compounds with the man, and in lieu of the performance of what he had ordered as a religious duty, he will receive the man's *money*, and remit the duty! Such a case has just occurred. In the letter of the Paris correspondent of the Christian Advocate and Journal, of New-York, under date of June 5, 1851, is the following statement: " One of the most monstrous usages " of the Romish Church, in a religious or moral point of " view is, that of transforming, for a bribe, into a lawful prac- " tice, that which, without the payment of a sum of money, " would be considered as a *sin!* Thus, in his last mandament " for Lent, the Archbishop of Rouen, primate of Normandy,

"forbids the use of *meat*, of *milk*, and of *butter*, during that "period; but, he adds, immediately, that a dispensation from "these austerities may be obtained by laying an alms for "eating meat and another for milk and butter, at the office "of his secretary!" So that the Frenchman, in possession of his snug little farm, with his wife and his children around him, may milk his cows and behold his well-stored dairy, his white and creamy pans and his luscious butter; but not a particle of it must they put in their mouths for forty days, without first paying his money to the priest for the privilege of enjoying the food which God had freely *given* to them! This is *marking the hand of labor* for the aggrandizement of the beast. THE IMAGE STILL LIVES!

The interdict against buying and selling, except upon the condition of having the mark, it was quite in the power of the image to enforce. The Jesuits engaged very extensively in trade, and conducted vast commercial operations; besides acquiring the sovereignty over the large and fertile province of Paraguay, in South America.

By those means they had it very much in their power to make such conditions as they chose with the people, and to stipulate the terms upon which the benefits of their extensive trade might be enjoyed by others. Their history forbids the idea that they would grant to any, *not* bearing the mark of the beast, advantages and privileges which they could so successfully employ to proselyte men whose theology never extended beyond the principle that, *gain* is *godliness.*

By these various means of proselyting and marking, it is easy to perceive that the "wealth of the order of Jesuits "kept pace with the increase of their power."

But marking the *forehead* became a very important object with them, as we shall see by the following short notices taken from their history.

"In consequence of the instructions given to this new "order by the Holy See," Russell says, "a spirit of intrigue "was infused into the whole fraternity. The Jesuits," he

remarks, "considered the education of youth as their pecu-
"liar province; they aimed at being spiritual guides and
"confessors; they preached frequently, in order to attract
"the notice of the people, and they set out as missionaries
"with a view to convert unbelieving nations. The novelty
"of the institution, as well as the singularity of its objects,
"procured the society many admirers and patrons. The
"generals and other officers had the address to avail them-
"selves of every circumstance in its favor; and, in a short
"time, the number as well as the influence of its members,
"was very considerable. Both increased wonderfully; and
"before the beginning of the seventeenth century, only sixty
"years after the institution of the order, the Jesuits had
"obtained the chief direction of *the education of youth* in
"every Catholic country in Europe!" (This was placing the
mark in the forehead!) "They had become the confessors
"of most of its monarchs! a function of no small importance
"in any reign, but under a weak prince, superior to that of
"minister.

"They were the spiritual guides of almost every person
"eminent for rank or power, and they possessed the highest
"degree of confidence and interest with the papal court as
"the most zealous and able *assertors of its dominion.*

"As they formed the minds of men in youth, they retained
"an ascendant over them in their more advanced years.
"They possessed, at different periods, the direction of the
"most considerable courts in Europe. They mingled in all
"public affairs, and took part in every intrigue and revolu-
"tion. Together with the power, the wealth of the order
"increased. The Jesuits acquired ample possessions in every
"popish kingdom; and, under pretext of promoting the suc-
"cess of their missionaries, they obtained a special license
"from the court of Rome to *trade* with the nations which
"they labored to convert. [This opened a wide field for
"placing the mark of the beast in the hand of labor.] In
"consequence of this permission, they engaged in an exten-

" sive and lucrative commerce both in the East and West In-
" dies, and they opened warehouses in different parts of Eu-
" rope where they vended their commodities.

" Not satisfied with trade alone, they imitated the example " of other commercial societies, and aimed at obtaining set- " tlements. They accordingly acquired possession of a large " and fertile province of South America, well known by the " name of Paraguay, and reigned as sovereigns over three or " four hundred thousand subjects. * * * *

" They have attributed to the Court of Rome a jurisdiction " as extensive and absolute as was claimed by the most pre- " sumptuous pontiffs during the dark ages; they have con- " tended for the entire independence of ecclesiastics on the " civil magistrates; and they have published such tenets con- " cerning the duty of opposing princes who were enemies to " the Catholic faith, as countenance the most atrocious " crimes, and tend to dissolve all the ties which connect sub- " jects with their rulers."

At the eighteenth verse it is said, that as many as would not *worship* the image of the beast *should be killed.* This worship, as before remarked, is mere submisson to the authority of the power that issues its commands to the people: yielding obedience, paying homage, is the worship alluded to.

The dominion of " the Holy See" seems to have been committed, for its preservation and its increase, to this image. The beast had clothed it with all necessary powers for this object, amongst which was the power of killing those who refused to obey its mandates. This killing, like the worship, is *political*—meaning to destroy the power of a government *by dissolving the ties which connect subjects with their rulers.*

One more extract from the history of this order, as it is briefly given by Russell, will suffice for the present:

" As the order derived both reputation and authority from " the zeal with which it stood forth in defence of the Romish " Church against the attacks of the champions of the Refor- " mation, its members, proud of this distinction, have con-

"sidered it as their peculiar function to combat the opinions "and to check the progress of the Protestants. They have "made use of every art and employed every weapon against "the reformed religion; they have set themselves in opposi- "tion to every gentle and tolerating measure in its favor; "and they have incessantly stirred up against its followers "all the rage of *ecclesiastical* and *civil* persecution." In this way, too, he *caused*, that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

Who can fail to observe the strong points of resemblance between the German Empire under Charles V. and the Ferdinands, his successors, in their efforts to kill Protestantism, and the measures of this *image* of that power, employed for the same purpose?

This image continues to the present time to give the most effective support to the beast. In truth, if it were not for *its* efforts, the beast would long since have perished in all those countries where the gospel is allowed freely to combat the errors of superstition and ignorance. But chiefly by the marking in the forehead, or, in other words, by the extensive control which the Jesuits have obtained over the education of the youth of those countries where religion has a free toleration, they are able to maintain the influence and the authority of the Romish Church.

The chief end of their educational system is to increase and strengthen the church. Whatever else is unlearned, the dogmas and the doctrines of the church must be learned, and its peculiar modes of worship must be rigidly practiced.

Protestant Churches, it will be said, also pay attention to the religious education of their youths. True, they do; in a very feeble manner, however. It would be well if they were more particular in this respect. They do not pursue education as a system of proselyting, and they seem to be content with adding just as much religious form and admonition as they hope may serve to counteract the insidious schemes of the image. Although the energy and perse-

verance of Protestant teachers on this subject fall infinitely short of the labors of Jesuits, they have had the happy effect. to a great extent, of checking the mischief which would have been done by allowing the enemy the unobstructed liberty of sowing his tares broad-cást over the Christian field.

That this institution, so indispensable to the existence of the Romish Church, should be designated by the term *image*, is singularly appropriate. The Church of Rome had the origin of her independent ecclesiastical existence in *image worship!*—this is history. I have had occasion to refer to it before, but will repeat simply so much of it as shows the origin of the church to have been as stated.

"The Emperor, Leo, the Isaurian, had abolished image-"worship at Constantinople, pronouncing it idolatry. He "then issued his commands to Gregory II., to remove the "images and pictures from the churches at Rome. Gregory, "in a tone of angry defiance, refused to comply with the "emperor's order. This open and bold resistance to the "emperor's authority was the commencement of a war which "ended in the independence of Rome, and the firm estab-"lishment of the images and pictures in all the churches. "Pope Gregory now stood at the head of the western "churches; and, as the proudest symbol of victory, image-wor-"ship was established as the religion of the western world."*

This order, which the prophet designates as the image, now upholds this same church! She wears the image upon her escutcheon, and it is the symbol of her origin and characteristic of her worship.

In the concluding verse of the chapter, the prophet gives the precise period of time during which the two-horned beast continued to exercise his great power.

In the construction of this eighteenth verse, the prophet seems to labor to make us understand, that the 666, which he gives as the number of the beast, implies a method of computing time, which is common and familiar with men.

* Croly

Eighteenth verse: *Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: and his number is six hundred, three score and six.*

This is but another mode of describing the beast, in order to establish more clearly, his identity. After other modes had been employed by the prophet, for this purpose, he now tells us his age, his number, or his years, are 666. When we would ascertain the age of a man we count the *number* of years he has lived, and whatever this number is, that is his age—and the number of the beast is the same as the number of a man.

In order to ascertain the age of the beast, we must first fix the period at which his existence commenced: not the existence of the Romish Church, but the period at which the head of that church set up the claim to universal temporal dominion over the kingdoms of the earth. It was this new feature of worldly authority that gave the title of *beast* to the popedom.

The first authoritative announcement of this temporal power was made by the famous Hildebrand, after he became Pope, under the title of Gregory VII. In him the popedom first laid its hands on the thrones of Europe, and claimed the submission of all kingdoms to his authority. We have seen his acts before, and only a very brief reference to them is necessary here.

Hildebrand was elected Pope in 1073. He kept very quiet, and conducted himself with an air of moderation until the emperor confirmed his election. This ceremony having passed, in the year 1074, Gregory spoke out in tones of authority and denunciation that startled all Europe. His first act was that by which he placed all civil authority under the feet of ecclesiastical power!

"He began his pontificate," says Russell, "with excommunicating every ecclesiastic who should receive a benefice "from a layman, and every layman by whom such benefice "should be conferred." This was engaging the church in an open war with the sovereigns of all nations.

"Gregory's project of making himself lord of Christendom "was manifest by not only dissolving the jurisdiction which "kings and emperors had hitherto exercised over the various "orders of clergy, but also by subjecting to the papal "authority all temporal princes, and rendering their domi-"nions tributary to the See of Rome."

The instance of the dispute concerning Hungary, already referred to, fully explains the doctrine of Popish supremacy, as laid down and applied by Gregory VII. Speaking to one of the parties contesting the right to the throne of Hungary: "You ought to know," said Gregory, "that the king-"dom of Hungary belongs to the Roman Church, and learn "that you will incur the indignation of *the Holy See* if "you do not acknowledge that *you hold your dominion of the* "*Pope!* and not of the emperor."

How often this bold assumption of power, first set up by Gregory, was exercised by the bulls and interdicts of subsequent Popes, history will show. It is not necessary, however, for the present purpose to follow its operations. This was the origin—the starting point of temporal authority and dominion of the Popedom, in the announcement it made to all Christendom, that *its* authority was to be held superior to all civil power. This was the rise of the beast with the two horns.

In order to ascertain when this beast fell, and when its exorbitant claims to supreme authority ceased to be regarded by the powers of Europe, we must find some act which was generally concurred in by the sovereigns of Europe, in opposition to such claims. The claims of the Popedom were occasionally denied and resisted by one and another sovereign; but these were separate and isolated cases. Fully to meet the case, we must find some general act of the kings which threw back upon Rome her bold pretensions, either by an avowed rejection of them, or what is still stronger, by treating them with silent contempt, in the adoption of great national measures, in direct opposition to such pretensions.

Such an act stands out, prominently in the history of the "*Pragmatic Sanction*," and the consequences that followed it.

It is proper to observe that this claim of supreme authority over the kingdoms of the earth was not so much of a religious as it was of a political or civil nature. It did not extend to determining what their religious faith should be, but it claimed the control of all civil power; the horns of the beast were *like* a lamb, but he spake like a *dragon* It is in this last character that the existence of the beast comes to an end, and this is effected by measures purely civil, or political.

By those acquainted with the history of the German empire, it will be readily understood that the "Pragmatic Sanction," was established for the purpose of securing to the heirs *female*, of the Emperor, Charles VI., in case he should die without male issue, all the hereditary dominions of the House of Austria.

This was a measure so different from the old established usages of succession, that Charles, while he lived, took the precaution to induce almost all the potentates of Europe to guarantee the "Pragmatic Sanction," that his eldest daughter might enjoy the quiet possession of his vast hereditary dominions. In this way many kingdoms and provinces of Europe were disposed of without consulting the will of the Pope, or so much as inviting from him a suggestion of his pleasure; although some of those very kingdoms had been named by Gregory VII., as the *property of the Church of Rome.*

Charles VI. died in 1740, and then the Pragmatic Sanction went into operation, and Maria Theresa, his eldest daughter, succeeded to his vast dominions, with the title of Queen of Hungary.

But she did not long enjoy the *quiet* possession of this great inheritance; for, although nearly all the European powers had pledged themselves to the support of her inheritance, a spirit of dissatisfaction soon began to show itself amongst those sovereigns. They began to ook with a jealous as

well as a lustful eye, upon the splendid sovereignty of Maria Theresa; and one and another set up claims to some portion of it, in order to enlarge their own territorial dominions. This ambition to acquire and bring under their authority, a greater amount of territory and more subjects, presently threw all Europe into a ferment; the ambition to extend their dominions became general amongst the kings and princes of Europe, and those who did not feel themselves able to enter into the contest for a portion of the great prize which Maria's vast domains presented to royal cupidity, turned upon the dominions, claimed or held by the Pope, as a prey more easily appropriated. In the midst of this general struggle, the old pretensions of the Popedom to supreme authority over the kingdoms, were totally abolished and trodden under foot.

The point that I am now aiming to establish, is the overthrow of the temporal power of the Popedom, as it was established in the pontificate of Gregory VII. History will furnish the proof in support of this position—only such events as relate to the Popedom will be briefly brought to the notice of the reader.

"The quarrel between the Duke of Parma and Pope "Clement XIII., independent of the family compact, was of "so limited a nature that it would have been decided with- "out the intervention of other powers, if France had not "stood engaged, by the secret articles of this compact, to "support the pretensions of the race of the Bourbon in every "part of Europe. The clergy and the religious orders in "all the territories belonging to the duchy of Parma, had "enjoyed such exclusive privileges, and in consequence had "increased to such a degree, that the revenues of the state "were considerably diminished; for, the ecclesiastics not only "claimed an exemption from all taxes on their estates and "effects, but also of a power of assigning over this right to "the purchasers of lands held by them. This most extra- "ordinary and unjust privilege occasioned fraudulent sales

"and conveyances, by which the state was greatly distressed, "and was making such a progress that scarce any of the "lands in the duchy would be subject to taxation if a stop was "not put to such proceedings. *Respectful application had been "made to the Pope to exert his authority*, and to act in concert "with the government of Parma, in the measures that should "be taken to reform this abuse. But the Pope gave no "answer to the Duke's memorials. Upon which he exerted "his sovereign power to eradicate this evil; accordingly he "published an ordinance which struck directly at the root of "the papal authority, and entirely put an end to it in the "duchy of Parma, for it cut off all communication between "the ecclesiastics and the Court of Rome, and deprived all "foreign priests of their benefices.

"The Pope, on his part, had recourse to the old—now "exploded—resource, of issuing out his bull against the "Duke; threatening him with excommunication and inter-"diction, if he did not restore to the clergy their ancient "privileges; declaring, also, that *ecclesiastics are not subject "to any temporal power*.

"Secure of the interposition of France, the infant duke "paid so little regard to the Pope's bull, that he instantly "took the most effectual method to prevent the mischief it "might, but for a prompt exercise of power, have occasioned. "The Jesuits were all seized in one night, and conducted to "the confines of the Pope's dominions, where they were left "to shift for themselves. The other Italian courts interested "in the affairs of Parma, took fire on the publication of the "Pope's bull; and scarce was it known at Naples, when the "King of Sicily sent a detachment of his troops to take pos-"session of Benevento and Ponte Corvo, *places belonging to the "Pope*, but situated within the boundaries of the king's do-"minions. At Paris this insolent bull met with a solemn "condemnation from the parliament in full assembly. It was "declared to be illegal and highly derogatory to the *honor "of all sovereign powers;* nor would it have found a place in

"this history *if it had not been the last act of papal usurpa-*
"*tion of the supreme authority of princes, on which the curtain*
"*is now dropped forever.*"*

This concluding sentence of the historian is conclusive evidence that the beast is now dead as to his power of speaking as a dragon. Some other instances connected with his downfall are worthy of notice, particularly the further effects of the bull.

"The Pope persisted in his refusal to withdraw this bull, "though strongly solicited by the courts of France, Spain, "and Vienna. All the Roman Catholic princes of Europe "took the alarm, and joined the common cause. Even the "Republic of Venice for once took part against the Holy "See; and it is generally believed that the grief and vexa-"tion which this unexpected stroke occasioned hastened the "death of the holy father, who now saw himself beset on "every side, *and his dominions invaded by different powers.*

"France revived a claim to Avignon and the Venaissin as "fiefs of that kingdom, and, without waiting for a discussion "of the title, took possession, in virtue of a commission given "by Louis XV. to the Marquis de Rochevart, at the head "of the regiment of Dauphine, and to the president and a "deputation of the parliament of Paris, who jointly carried "it into execution without loss of time. On the 11th of "June the French dragoons appeared before the gates of the "Pope's palace at Avignon, removed the old Swiss Guard, "kicked open the gates with their jack-boots, and entered "the palace in triumph, when the marquis, in great state, re-"ceived the homage of the people in the name of the king, "his master, and caused the arms of France, which he had "brought with him, to be affixed over the city gates. * * "The towns of Carpentras and Cavaillon, in the Venaissin, "were given up to the French forces in the same peaceable "manner, *and the Pope's officers, civil and military*, retired to "Antibes, from whence they embarked for Italy.

* Russell.

"On the other hand, the King of Sicily laid claim to the "duchies of Castro and Renciglions, which extend almost "to the environs of Rome, and publicly threatened to send "commissioners, in the space of two months, supported by a "sufficient military force, to take possession of these duchies, "which he considered as dismembered parts of his ancient "kingdom. He likewise adopted the same reformation in "his dominions which had incensed the Pope against the "Duke of Parma. *The Jesuits were expelled;* and the king "published an edict informing his subjects that the *Pope "should be considered only as the first bishop of the Catholic "Church, and that his authority was less than that of a gene- "ral council.* These doctrines could not have been hazarded "while the Jesuits remained in the country. To complete "the misfortune of Clement XIII., the Duke of Modena laid "claim to the duchy of Ferrara, formerly the property of "the House of Este, but long since ceded to the Popes by "treaties. In this extremity the Pope at last began to sue "for peace, and solicited the Court of Vienna, in the most "humiliating manner, to interpose, and to use its interest in "his behalf."

These historical incidents show most clearly that the power claimed by Gregory VII. over all Christendom was now at an end. But to place that fact beyond all possibility of doubt, let us contrast the position of the two Popes, Gregory and Clement.

In the pontificate of Gregory we see the greatest monarch of Europe, Henry IV., Emperor of Germany, at the feet of the Pope, stript of his royal apparel and covered with sack-cloth, standing barefoot, and fasting for three days, waiting to be allowed to humble himself before his holiness and implore his pardon! But now we behold the Pope (Clement XIII.) *at the feet of the Queen of Hungary*, imploring the exercise of her influence and power in his behalf, and using such language as the following: "*Prayers and tears are my*

"*weapons. I honor the potentates whom God is pleased to em-*
"*ploy for the castigation of his Church.*"

This closes the drama of the great political power of the two-horned beast; his power of speaking as a dragon exists no longer; the number of his years is completed, which, as the prophet informs us, is 666!

The remark is trite that it is one of the peculiarities of prophecy to announce a thing as done, when the cause, which is to produce the effect has only begun to operate.

Gregory VII.'s election to the popedom was completed by the emperor's confirmation in 1074, when the new Pope announced the extravagant claim of lordly dominion over all Christendom. The "Pragmatic Sanction" went into operation on the death of the emperor, Charles VI., which occurred in 1740. Causes then began to operate which speedily led to the overthrow of the exorbitant pretensions of the Holy See, and humbled the popedom in the person of Clement XIII., and brought him to the feet of civil authority.

The period which elapsed between these two remarkable epochs was precisely 666 years, which was, in prophetic language, *the number of the beast!*

We pass now to other scenes of the prophetic panorama more congenial with the Christian's taste and faith.

ERRATA OF VOL. I.

Page 17, *line* 13, *for* description *read* ascription.
" 107, " 14, *for* entirely *read* actively.
" 112, " 28, *for* But *read* Both.
" 121, " 1, *for* flattering *read* faltering.
" 137, " 24, *for* prosecution *read* persecution.
" 245, " 4, *for* these *read* there.
" 245, " 30, *for* them *read* their.
" 284, " 27, *for* feet on fire, *read* feet of fire.
" 303, " 21, *for* blood *read* flood.
" 303, *last line*, *for* Passaco *read* Passau.
" 315, *line* 33, *for* mark *read* work.
" 362, " 15, *for* pacified *read* purified.
" 382, " 18, *for* evident by *read* evidently.

NOTE.—There are some other errors, of little consequence, which will also be corrected in the next edition.